

Loaves & Fishes

A Dutch windmill stands in a vast field of pink tulips under a dramatic sunset sky. The windmill is a traditional wooden structure with a dark roof and a lattice-like tail pole. The tulips are in full bloom, creating a dense carpet of pink. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with soft clouds.

Issue 29

*The Justice of
Forgiveness*

**Dress Your Heart
for Success**

*Corrie ten Boom
on Forgiveness*

Miracles Can Happen

If you just put Christ Jesus first,
And use His words to quench your thirst,
Any problem would be solvable—
With prayer, anything is possible.

Even fear can be erased,
But the love of God can't be replaced.
Mere faith alone can give us wings;
Through Jesus, we can do all things!

Please don't think it's just a bother
To bow your head and thank the Father.
It's plain to see He does adore you;
God's miracle has been put before you.

The blood of Christ stained the cross,
And for our sins He paid the cost;
But gratefully His life didn't end,
When three days later He rose again!

Some were intimately forewarned
Before His miracle was performed;
They found His words did not deceive,
And it gave them strength to just believe—

That miracles can happen.

Christopher Diamond, Sr.
Wateree River Correctional Institution, Rembert, SC

We publish *Loaves & Fishes* as the Lord provides. Our goal is to point those in prison to Jesus Christ and help them experience the life, hope, and freedom of a daily walk with Him.

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Loaves & Fishes

Issue 29

In This Issue...

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| From the Editor | 2 |
| Dress Your Heart for Success | 4 |
| The Justice of Forgiveness | 9 |
| Let's Study: Hebrews | 17 |
| Science in Creation: | |
| What Is Science? | 20 |

Free on the Inside

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Satan's Snare | 25 |
| The Highest Court | 26 |
| Testimony of Alvin Daniels | 27 |
| All I Have to Offer | 29 |
| The Lord's Loving Arms | 30 |
| Testimony: Washed in the Blood | 31 |

| | |
|--------------------------------------|----|
| Word Search Puzzle | 32 |
| Corrie Ten Boom on Forgiveness | 33 |
| The Pursuit of Godly Seed | |
| Where Are the Men? | 38 |
| The Christ of the Andes | 45 |

Inside Cover:

Miracles Can Happen
Man of Sorrows

ALERT: THIS COULD BE YOUR LAST ISSUE

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The Weight of a Grudge

Lavern Gingerich

You've probably heard the saying, "He's carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders." Any responsible person must learn to carry weight on their shoulders, but the "weight of the world" is an unbearable burden we were never meant to carry.

One way we strap the weight of the world on our shoulders is by hanging onto a grudge toward another person. A grudge is a persistent feeling of resentment or ill will toward someone who hurt you in the past. The opposite of holding a grudge is to forgive.

If you've ever carried a grudge, you know what a heavy burden it is. The weight of spite, bitterness, and anger will eventually crush you; meanwhile, it will rob you of successful relationships and a fulfilling life. Holding a grudge against someone is like drinking a cup of poison and

hoping the other person will die—the hurt you wish on your offender falls on you.

A successful relationship is a gift we should never take for granted. God designed us to thrive in successful relationships, but they won't happen without effort on our part. They often require a lot of work and maintenance. Sadly, many God-given relationships between husbands and wives and between parents and youth



Holding a grudge is like drinking a cup of poison and hoping the other person will die.

are strained or even abandoned because of the effort it takes to make things work.

If you are facing trouble in your relationships, don't despair. Relationships can be challenging for even the most mature person, but they are worth fighting for. When our relationships work, we can experience the peace and harmony God intended for us and avoid the confusion and pain that come from broken homes, marriages, and friendships.

Sometimes a strained relationship can be linked to a painful experience in the past, followed by a grudge which has grown into a suffocating weight of bitterness. Sometimes it is the result of ongoing irritations. The key to freedom is in how you respond to these irritations and pain—you can win by forgiving your enemy. You may feel vulnerable and weak before your offender, but you don't need his or her permission to forgive!



You can exchange the weight of a grudge for love and glorious freedom.

Getting even doesn't remove the weight of bitterness; the only way to find freedom is to forgive.

Are you carrying the weight of a grudge on your shoulders today? You can drop that burden and exchange the weight of a grudge for the lightness of love and glorious freedom! We hope the articles and stories in this issue will inspire you and help you find peace in your relationships.



But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 6:15

Dress Your Heart for Success

Mike Fisher

Clothing means a lot in our world.

Our first impression of people often comes from what they are wearing. Jeans, sneakers, and a tank top create an entirely different first impression from a tailored suit and smartly polished shoes.

Our clothing choices affect how others treat us. Different dress styles evoke different responses, from respect and admiration to disgust or fear. Carefully chosen apparel can help you get a promotion, close a business deal, attract friends, or fit into a group. Hairstyles, makeup, jewelry, and tattoos also affect how people perceive each other.

The Bible says, “Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7b). God sees right through the shell of our outward appearance to the real person inside.

If you are a believer in Jesus, the Son of God, you are a new

person. You are holy, chosen, and loved by God. This is who you really are inside.

As a child of God, you no longer need to adorn your outward appearance to impress or manipulate others. You already have the full attention of the only One who matters—the loving God of heaven and earth.

As a believer, your success does not depend on makeup or expensive suits. You don’t have to follow the latest fashions to fit into God’s family. You are already a success, and you belong in the family of God because the Spirit of Jesus is living in you.



You don't have to follow the latest fashions to fit into God's family.

When you repent and surrender to the redeeming work of Jesus, God transforms your heart. A transformed heart will affect your outward appearance, since you will no longer use your clothing to express pride and self-will. But a transformed heart goes far beyond appearance to transform your lifestyle and character as well.

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul the apostle urges us to dress ourselves in a set of character traits we might call a Christian's "fashion wardrobe."

"Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection" (Colossians 3:12-14).

Business magazines are full of advertisements and articles showing how to dress for success by imitating the styles of powerful people in Washington, D.C. or Wall Street. Here, Paul tells us how to dress ourselves for *spiritual* success, using Jesus as our model and seeking to imitate Him.

To look like Jesus, Paul says we will need to wear the following articles of spiritual clothing:

- Tender mercies
- Kindness
- Humility
- Meekness
- Longsuffering
- Bearing with one another
- Forgiveness
- Love

What if people's first impression of you was as a person of *tender mercy*? A genuinely merciful person instantly puts others at ease. "Put on tender mercies," Paul says.

Think of mercy as being a pair of glasses. Put on your glasses of mercy when you get up in the morning, and try to see everyone through the merciful eyes of Christ. How would Jesus look at your cellmate, or that guard who's giving everyone a hard time? Practice seeing unlovable people with eyes of compassion, seeking to understand their hurting hearts instead of focusing on their faults.

Put on *kindness*. A person wearing the garment of kindness brings healing and joy



Practice seeing unlovable people
with eyes of compassion.

into tough situations. Letting another person go first in line, taking time to talk to someone lonely, or remembering someone's birthday are simple ways of putting on kindness. Speaking in a kind and gentle tone disarms people who are angry. "A soft answer turns away wrath" (Proverbs 15:1).

Paul says we should wear *humility*. Preoccupation with clothes, makeup, and other adornment is pride—seeking to exalt ourselves and impress others. Believers in Jesus are to be humble, trying to make Jesus look good, not themselves.

Humility is an attitude of the heart that reveals itself in the way we talk, dress, and act. Humble people know they don't have all the answers, so they are good listeners. They are content to let God lift them up, so they don't brag on themselves.

Think of humility as a hat. Instead of the elaborate, classy hat of pride, wear the common, simple hat of humility.

Meekness is another key item in the Christian's wardrobe. To be meek is to be quiet, gentle, and yielding. Wear a meek attitude like a scarf—drape it around yourself for extra warmth on a wintry day. Jesus said, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matthew 11:29).

Dress like Jesus—put on meekness. What will be the result? If you are restless, full of tension and conflict, the garment of meekness can bring you peace and rest.

The next two items Paul mentions are like a pair of gloves—"longsuffering" and "bearing with one another." They both refer to patience with others. It is easy to see the faults of others and become frustrated when they don't change the way we think they should.

Someone I know said that while he was growing up, most of his father's commands were followed by the words, "and HURRY UP!" As a father, I find myself saying that sometimes, too. God, however, is a patient

and kind father. He waits many years for us to come to Him and many more years for us to become mature believers. Even though we never become completely flawless, He continues to love us and teach us. To be like Him, we must patiently bear with those around us who are not what they should be.

Next comes an important garment: *forgiveness*. Forgiveness is as essential to the believer's wardrobe as a fur parka is to an Eskimo—without it, we cannot hope to survive. Jesus said, "If you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" (Matthew 6:15).

You cannot survive as a Christian if God does not forgive your sins. By making the forgiveness of our sins conditional on our forgiveness of others, God has made forgiveness absolutely necessary for the believer. Being a Christian means forgiving others, without any exceptions.

Forgiveness is vital for spiritual freedom. Someone has said, "To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you.... You will know that forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well."¹

If this does not describe you, pray earnestly every day for God to help you forgive. Without forgiveness, you will not survive.

The garment of love completes our wardrobe. Paul said that love is the "bond of perfection." Love is like a strong leather belt that keeps the rest of the clothing in order—it supports all the other character traits. We forgive because we love. We are humble because we love. We are gentle and kind because we love.



You will know forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well.

An acquaintance of mine sells handmade leather belts. Amazingly, he guarantees them for

life. That's a real belt! Like those leather belts, the love of God is guaranteed to work. "God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him" (1 John 4:16).

God's love is the foundation of everything He has done for us. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

If God is in you, you will be a loving person. Hatred cannot exist inside a loving heart. If hatred is showing in your appearance and actions, you need to repent and be filled with the love of Jesus, the durable garment that keeps everything together in perfect order.

How should you dress for true success? Menacing tattoos, luxurious outfits, or other self-exalting adornments only bring

temporary satisfaction. But if you wear the marvelous spiritual wardrobe of Jesus Christ, you will find lasting peace and rest, and genuine success in the things that matter for eternity.

To wear these spiritual clothes, you must be transformed by the power of God, and you must choose to put on the godly attitudes in this passage. Inner transformation will be followed by outer transformation, and you will begin to look and act like Jesus.

Earlier in the same passage where Paul describes the Christian's wardrobe, he tells us what clothing to remove: "But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him" (Colossians 3:8-10).

God is transforming you, and as you put on His beautiful garments, you are becoming what He created you to be. May God bless you in this process of renewal. ~



Inner transformation will be followed by outer transformation.

¹Lewis B. Smedes, as quoted in "Restoring Broken Trust: A Relationship's Greatest Challenge" by Mark Beaird, 2013.

The Justice of Forgiveness

J. Anthony Hertzler

Standing behind the counter of the Mini Mart he ran with a friend, Rais Bhuiyan glanced up to see who had just walked in. A man in a bandanna and sunglasses was pointing a sawed-off shotgun at him.

“Where are you from?” the man demanded. Before Rais could answer, the gun roared and his face exploded in pain.

The man with the shotgun was Mark Stroman, a self-described “Arab killer” seeking vengeance for the 9/11 attacks by killing people he thought looked “Middle-Eastern.” Rais Bhuiyan, a Muslim immigrant from Bangladesh, not the Middle East, was the second of three men shot by Stroman in the

weeks after September 11, 2001; Stroman’s other two victims, a Pakistani and an Indian, did not survive.

Stroman was caught and arrested after his third attack. At his trial, he showed no remorse, calling himself a “real American” who had done only what others were too cowardly to do, and openly mocking the victims’ families in the audience. He was convicted of murder and sentenced to death.

Rais Bhuiyan never recovered the vision in his right eye, and his face still bears lumps from embedded shotgun pellets. He lost his job, and his hospital bills left him penniless. But during his long recovery, as he wrestled

As he wrestled with his feelings about the man who had shot him in cold blood, Rais made a strange decision.



with his feelings about the man who had shot him in cold blood, Rais made a strange decision: instead of hating Mark Stroman, Rais chose to forgive him.

Rais Bhuiyan learned that Mark Stroman had grown up in an abusive home, with a mother who once told him he had been born only because she was fifty dollars short of the money she needed for an abortion. The more Rais learned about his attacker's pain, the more compassion he felt for him. By releasing his enemy in his heart—by refusing to demand revenge from the man who had tried to destroy him—Rais set himself free from the slavery of hatred. Instead of being poisoned by bitterness, he began to be healed by love.

In the Lord's Prayer, the model prayer Jesus gave us, we ask God to "forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" (Matthew 6:12^{ESV}). Can you pray that prayer? Can you safely

ask God to give you the same forgiveness you have given your own enemies?

That's a tough question for any of us, and it raises lots of other questions. "But what about justice?" we ask. "What that person did was wrong! He deserves to suffer for it! How can I just go on and act like nothing happened?"

Satisfying answers can be hard to find. For every bully, abuser, thief, or killer whose number gets called, there are many more who seem to get away with it. If we don't make our enemies pay for what they've done to us, who will?

God has answered these painful questions, and His answers are both astonishing and deeply satisfying. First, God has promised to give you justice. Every time you've been misused, taken advantage of, or lied about, God saw what really happened. He hasn't forgotten the evil you experienced, and He hasn't



Even as you read
these words,
God is hard at work
on your case,
and He never loses.

Real justice is fully
accomplished
when both the victim
and the offender
are set free.



forgotten your pain. He's going to see to it that you get justice if it takes Him all eternity. Even as you read these words, He is hard at work on your case, and He never loses.

Why does the wicked renounce God and say in his heart, "You will not call to account"? But you do see, for you note mischief and vexation, that you may take it into your hands; to you the helpless commits himself; you have been the helper of the fatherless....O Lord, you hear the desire of the afflicted; you will strengthen their heart; you will incline your ear to do justice to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that man who is of the earth may strike terror no more.
(Psalm 10:13–14, 17–18)

God promises to punish evil-doers who attack the innocent. That much makes sense to us. But God's justice goes far, far beyond that. Unlike many human judges, God promises also

to listen to "the desires of the afflicted," to "strengthen their hearts," to "do justice... to the oppressed," and to stop the terror caused by evildoers.

When you think about it, it's clear that punishment by itself can't accomplish real justice. If your neighbor Joe burns your house down, and now you're sleeping on the street, how much comfort does it give you on a snowy February night to know that Joe is sitting in a cell somewhere? Even if Joe's cell is *cold*—does that really help you feel better about having everything you owned turned into a pile of smoking rubble? Joe's suffering is hardly going to get you a dry bed or a hot meal, is it?

That's one reason why God's justice is never satisfied with merely punishing offenders. God promises to restore the victims as well—to heal the pain, repair the damage, and make your life even better than it was before



What better argument
could there be
for forgiving
our enemies
than the blood of Jesus?

you were hurt. Restoring everything, one piece at a time, back to the way it should be—*that's* what God calls justice.

Real justice—restoring things to the way they should be—is fully accomplished when both the victim and the offender are set free; free of hate, free of selfishness, free of fear; free to love each other again as fellow children of God. This freedom of the heart is far more precious and satisfying than mere physical liberty—and the only way to purchase it is through forgiveness.

Forgiveness is a powerful key to personal victory. It is the only act with the power to restore broken relationships and bring full justice to offenders and victims. Forgiveness can tear down walls of hurt and suspicion that have taken long years to build. Forgiveness can take the one who has been hurt and the one who hurt him—and make them

friends. This is the highest and most satisfying form of justice, and this is what God dreams of doing in your relationships, if you let Him.

It is true that in this life, we cannot always win our enemies over; even if we do all we can to reach out, they can still reject us. But we do not need our enemies' permission to forgive them; we can do that any time we choose. In forgiveness, we free ourselves from the power of our enemies. We also open a door of friendship to them, whether they choose to walk through it or not.

If you have ever tried to forgive a serious offense, you know it isn't easy. In fact, forgiveness is one of the hardest things you will ever do. Satan knows if you discover the unbelievable power and freedom of forgiveness, he loses much of his power over you, so he will give you a million reasons not to forgive.

You might not be strong enough to forgive on your own. But if you are determined to honor God and forgive your enemies, God will give you the strength it takes. Call on Him for His empowering grace, then choose in faith to release those who have wronged you.

If that seems like too much to ask, remember this: we humans spit on the Son of God, and our sins—yours and mine included—drove Jesus to an agonizing death on a Roman cross. God does not pretend it never happened—in fact, He has had the whole story recorded in the Gospels, where it cannot be forgotten. Yet He offers to forgive us all, free and clear, to welcome us back into His family, and to shower us with the blessings of heaven. What better argument could there be for forgiving our enemies than the blood of Jesus?

By now, I hope you can see that forgiveness and justice, far from working against each other, are so closely intertwined in God's heart that they can never be separated. God forgives us because He is just; and in this broken world, no one can experience true justice without forgiveness.

The more Rais Bhuiyan thought about Mark Stroman, the more he wondered if he could do more for the man who had tried to kill him. What if he could go beyond forgiving Mark and actually become his friend? What if he could save his enemy's life?

As Mark Stroman's final months and weeks ticked toward his execution date, he heard shocking news. The young Muslim gas station attendant from Bangladesh—the man he had shot in the face—was fighting to save him. Rais Bhuiyan had started a movement called World Without Hate, and had launched an appeal to have Mark's death sentence commuted to life without parole.

Mark Stroman had been doing a lot of thinking since he was locked up, and now he thought some more. His world of hate and revenge, his image of himself as a noble warrior, was crumbling. Here was a man he had labeled as the enemy and had tried to kill in a fit of patriotic rage; and the man would not hate him back. Mark's hatred had finally met its match.

The government rejected Rais Bhuiyan's appeals to save Mark Stroman's life. But Stro-



By forgiving
and extending love,
Rais experienced
a far deeper
and more satisfying
justice.

man's heart was softened and changed by the knowledge that the man he had tried to kill was trying to save him. In the months before his death, Mark wrote a letter to Rais in which he said, "I was completely and utterly wrong and I hope you can forgive me."

Rais Bhuiyan sued the state of Texas for a 30-day stay of execution to allow him to meet Mark Stroman face to face. He was denied. However, the two men did manage to hold a single phone conversation over a patchy connection.

"I forgive you and I do not hate you," Rais told Mark.

"Thank you from my heart!" Mark answered. "I love you, bro."

Three hours after that conversation, as Mark Stroman was strapped down for the injection that would end his life, he said, "I am at total peace. God bless America. God bless everyone."

Mark Stroman died for the murder he committed. According to the State of Texas, that was justice. But Rais Bhuiyan, by forgiving and extending love, experienced a far deeper and more satisfying justice—the justice of seeing his worst enemy transformed into a friend.

In the end, we have all been hurt and have hurt others. Revenge—hurting those who hurt us—only drives the poison of their hate deeper into our own wounds. The only path to healing is to forgive, replacing vengeance with love. The power of suffering love can soften the hardest heart, as it did with Mark Stroman. But even if your enemy never repents, forgiveness sets you free to live in peace and joy, unchained from the evil of your enemy. And that is the sweetest justice in the world.





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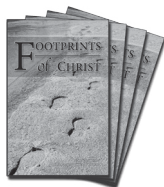
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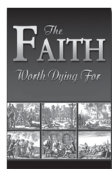
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Let's Study...

Hebrews

Mike Fisher



- **Hebrews** is the 58th book of the Bible and the 19th book of the New Testament.
- **Author.** The author of the book is not identified. Hebrews 2:3 seems to indicate that the writer was not one of the twelve disciples who followed Jesus during his life. Clearly, the author was an early Jewish Christian leader who knew his people well and cared deeply for them.
- **Time of Writing.** Hebrews was likely written between 50 and 70 AD. The city of Jerusalem, along with the Jewish sacrificial system, was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. Speaking of the “old covenant,” which included the sacrificial system instituted by God in the Old Testament, the writer says, “What is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away (Hebrews 8:13).” This suggests that the writer may have known the Roman army was surrounding Jerusalem, and that the Jewish system of worship was collapsing as he wrote.
- **Historical Context.** Hebrews was written in excellent Greek, indicating a Greek-speaking Jewish audience. There are indications that these believers were facing a time of suffering, and that they had also experienced persecution in the past. During this period, there were several outbreaks of persecution of Christians by the Roman government. These Jewish Christians also faced hostility from the Jews. Because of their suffering, returning to the Jewish faith was a strong temptation for Jewish Christians at this time.
- **Summary.** The goal of the writer is to encourage the Jewish Christians to finish the race they had begun, and not turn back to Judaism. The primary message of the book is the superiority



Like the Jews of the first century, we may be tempted to abandon the new and better way of Jesus in favor of false and empty world-views.

of Jesus Christ and the new covenant over the old covenant. (A covenant is an agreement; through Christ, God made a new and better agreement with humanity.) He shows how Jesus is superior to the Old Testament prophets and priests and even the angels of heaven.

Because of these things, the writer argues, the believers should continue in the faith. For encouragement and inspiration, he spends all of chapter 11 sharing examples of past heroes of faith. However, the encouraging tone of the letter is punctuated with strong warnings against unbelief and sin.

The message of Hebrews is relevant to us. Like the Jews of the first century, we may be tempted to abandon the new and better way of Jesus in favor of false and empty world-views. Our faith is like a race. We need encouragement to keep going, just as many have gone victoriously before us.

- **Themes.** *The superiority of Christ* is the clear central theme of Hebrews. *Exhortation* is a theme that builds throughout the book: keep going and don't look back. Another theme is that of the children of God being a *pilgrim people*. The pilgrimage of the children of Israel is used as a negative example to urge us not to turn back. This theme is used to encourage the readers to endure difficulty and keep moving toward the goal.
- **Key Verse.** "Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession" (Hebrews 4:14).

- **Book Outline**

- I. The superiority of Christ (Hebrews 1:1–8:6)
 - A. Better than the prophets (Hebrews 1:1–3)
 - B. Better than the angels (Hebrews 1:4–2:18)
 - C. Better than Moses (Hebrews 3:1–4:13)
 - D. Better than Aaron (Hebrews 4:16–8:6)
- II. The superiority of the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:7–10:18)
 - A. Better promises (Hebrews 8:7–13)
 - B. Better sanctuary (Hebrews 9:1–28)
 - C. Better sacrifice (Hebrews 10:1–18)
- III. Exhortations drawn from this superiority (Hebrews 10:19–13:25)
 - A. Draw near to God (Hebrews 10:19–39)
 - B. Run the race of faith (Hebrews 11:1–12:29)
 - C. Miscellaneous exhortations (Hebrews 13:1–25)

- **Study Exercises:**

- » Read the book of Hebrews. As you read, see how often the writer speaks of the superiority of Jesus. Note how often the word “better” is used.
- » Look up the six warnings of the book of Hebrews. In the blank following each reference, write what the writer is warning against in each passage.
 - Hebrews 2:1–4 _____
 - Hebrews 3:12–15 _____
 - Hebrews 4:11–13 _____
 - Hebrews 5:11–6:6 _____
 - Hebrews 10:26–39 _____
 - Hebrews 12:25–29 _____
- » Chapter 11 lists the names of many heroes of faith, all of whose stories are found in the Old Testament. Most of them are found in the first two books of the Bible, Genesis and Exodus. For further inspiration, read the complete stories of Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Noah, and the others. Their faith encourages us thousands of years later.

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Science in Creation

What Is Science?

Andrew Zimmerman

What is science? The Oxford dictionary defines science as “The intellectual and practical activity encompassing the systematic study of the structure and behavior of the physical and natural world through observation and experiment.” More simply, science is a system for learning about the physical and natural world. Science can include the social sciences, such as psychology and anthropology, but in this article we’ll discuss the natural sciences, such as physics, chemistry, and geology.

The *scientific method* is the process by which scientists explore the natural world. The basic principles of the scientific method can be traced back to the ancient Greeks and Arabs. The

scientific method recognizes and articulates the proper way of gaining knowledge of the natural world. During the Scientific Revolution in the 1600’s, scientists such as Galileo and Newton further developed the use of the scientific method.

Scientists use the scientific method to explore a specific problem or question using *ob-*

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servation, *hypothesis*, *prediction*, *experimentation*, and *conclusion*.

In the *observation* step, the scientist defines the question or problem and finds out as much as possible about it through research. Observing includes noticing specifics of the question or problem through the use of the senses. Observation may include using instruments to measure and to collect data. Observation must be done carefully in order to provide quality information for a good *hypothesis*.

A *hypothesis* is a proposed answer to the question. A hypothesis must be logical and agree with the data gathered in the observation step. The scientist uses logical reasoning to develop a hypothesis that tries to explain the observations.

Based on the hypothesis, the scientist makes a *prediction*. The prediction is an experimental

result that can be expected to happen if the hypothesis is correct, but not if the hypothesis is incorrect.

To test the prediction, the scientist designs an *experiment*. The experiment must be done in a controlled environment to minimize unpredictable results from outside influences.

If the results of the experiment do not match the scientist's prediction, the hypothesis may need to be rejected or revised. If the results of the experiment do match the prediction, however, this does not prove the hypothesis is correct. A hypothesis that is not rejected can be used as the basis for further predictions, to be tested by further experiments, which may either disprove or strengthen the hypothesis.

Good experiments are *repeatable*. The hypothesis and the results of experiments may be published for review, so other scientists can repeat the experiment and see if they get the same results.

As an example, suppose we noticed that some of our house plants were dying. Let's assume we don't already know plants need watered regularly. We want to use the scientific method to find out why our plants are dy-



To test predictions,
scientists design experiments.



*The scientific method depends
on an orderly universe
and a natural world
that follows laws.*

ing. Let's go through the steps of the scientific method.

First, we carefully observe the dying plants, noticing the wilted appearance and dry soil. We notice that the plants that appear healthier still have moist soil. We form a hypothesis: lack of water can cause plants to wilt and die.

What kind of experiment can we design to test the hypothesis? We could have a group of plants that we water regularly, and an identical group that we don't water. We'll use identical plants in the two groups, in the same growing environment. After a period of time, if there is no difference between the two groups, we would reject the hypothesis. But if the group without water is wilting and dying while the watered plants are doing well, we would not reject the hypothesis.

The steps in the scientific method are done repeatedly; a hypothesis may be refined as more experiments and results are analyzed. The scientific method depends on an orderly universe and a natural world that follows laws. The scientific method assumes that if we perform the same experiment repeatedly under the same conditions, it will produce the same results every time.

The scientific method also depends on the laws of logic—for example, two statements that contradict each other cannot both be true. But where do the laws of logic come from? In a universe driven by random events over ages of time, how would such laws come about?

In a universe with a Creator, the Creator is the Lawgiver. The universe follows the Creator's laws. The laws of logic, for instance, are God's standard for thinking.



*The universe follows
the Creator's laws.*

The Creator has the power to suspend the laws of nature and do miracles. Because miracles, by definition, are exceptions to the laws of nature, science cannot prove or disprove a miracle. With a miracle, there is no way to design a repeatable experiment to test a hypothesis.

According to secular scientists, creation science is not a real science but a religion, since it's based on the Bible rather than empirical science. However, any explanation of origins must be based on certain assumptions, and thus it is not strictly empirical science.

Since the universe was formed long ago under unknown conditions we can't duplicate now, there is no repeatable experiment that could test a hypothesis about how it happened. To explore subjects like this, scientists must make observations and develop their hypotheses by relying on assumptions and philosophical reasoning.

Secular science is based on the premise that a strict, unbiased interpretation of evidence will uncover the truth. However, in the real world, there is no such thing as a purely unbiased interpretation; everyone has a worldview through which they

interpret what they see. The disagreement between creationism and evolution does not arise because some evidence supports one and some evidence supports the other. In fact, both sides have the same evidence—they just understand and interpret it differently.

Historical science is limited by the impossibility of doing experiments on the past. Experiments cannot show us how life originated. Discovering the origin of life is outside the realm of empirical, observational science.



Historical science is limited by the impossibility of doing experiments on the past.

Atheistic scientists cannot allow a divine being within their world-view, and thus seek only natural explanations for the way things are. Yet they reason using the laws of logic, and they depend on the orderliness of natural laws in their experi-

ments. It proves difficult to start with nothing and arrive at our orderly universe and life.

Creation scientists begin with God and the Biblical account of creation. Observations of the natural world are used to form hypotheses and testable experiments. Historical evidence, such as fossils, is interpreted in the context of a recent creation and the Biblical account of a worldwide Flood. Creation scientists contribute to the welfare of humanity through medicine, inventions, engineering, and many other fields.

An example of a testable prediction by a creation scientist is the calculation of the strength of planets' magnetic fields as we discussed in a previous article about our solar system. Dr.

Russell Humphreys' prediction of the strength of the magnetic fields of Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto was confirmed correct by the measurements made by space probes years later. Secular scientists' predictions, based on the presupposition of a much older universe, were not even close.

As science discovers and understands more about God's creation, we see more and more complexity, including wondrous details that point to the greatness of the Creator. Science depends on laws of logic, laws of nature, and the intelligence of created humans. Let us be awed by creation, and let us worship our Creator! ~

Resource for further study: Ultimate Proof of Creation, by Dr. Jason Lisle



Somewhere in Matthew 5

Unscramble the hidden verse (NKJV).

Bdesels aer the kmee orf yeth lhsla inherit hte retah.

Reference: _____



Free on the Inside

Prisoners encourage Prisoners

Satan's Snare

To be easily offended is a snare to the soul—
A tool of the enemy to accomplish his goal.

Offenses will come, and it's easy to stumble;
We must watch and pray and stay humble.

Satan is out to sift us, and that's a fact;
Be mindful of his tactics. Learn not to relax.

Hatred, pride, and fear he'll use to ensnare,
But God's ready to help—just cry out in prayer.

For that battle is not ours; it belongs to the Lord;
So when offenses come, count it all joy.

Satan was defeated on Calvary—use the sword,
The word of God, and he has to flee.

All that you'll need you will find in the Son;
Walk in the Spirit, and you will find you've already won!

Judith Gamble, Lowell Correctional Institution, Ocala, FL



*The battle is
not ours;*

*it belongs to
the Lord.*



The Highest Court

I was lost and all alone,
Behind these bars of steel;
Afraid of what was ahead of me,
With no one to appeal.

I heard of the man named Jesus,
So I dropped down on my knees;
As tears ran down my face,
I cried, "Jesus, help me please!"

I confessed my sins to Him,
Truly from my heart;
He said, "Your sins are forgiven;
I've loved you from the start."

Thank you, Jesus, for saving me,
And for all your words of truth;
He said, "All these years I've waited,
Since you were a youth."

He was obedient to His Father's will
Even to the cross of Calvary,
So He could fill me with His Spirit,
And with His love for me.

I am here to tell you,
If you're lost and without appeal,
Call upon the name of Jesus,
And by His blood you will be healed!

James Roth
Men's Central Jail, Los Angeles, CA

TESTIMONY OF ALVIN DANIELS

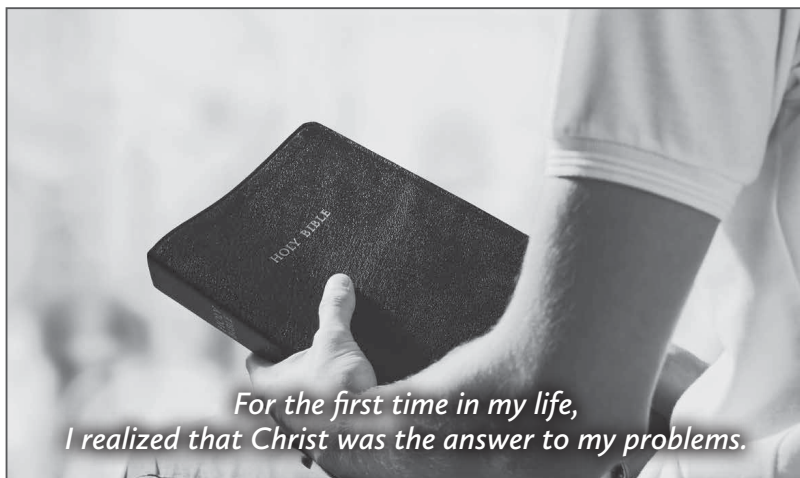
Anniston, AL

I'd like to share how God worked an unusual miracle in my life, similar to how He did in Paul's life (Acts 19:11). As a senior citizen who has spent more than half my life in jails and prisons throughout the United States, I consider myself an expert on how to end up there.

Though I was raised in a Christian home in Wisconsin, Satan, the father of all lies, entered my life when I was still quite young. I thought I was more intelligent than anyone else, so it wasn't a hard sell for him to convince me that the

message of the cross is foolishness. But he left out the part that said, "...to those who are perishing, but to us who are saved it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18)!

I regarded as foolish all the religious stuff about Jesus being the son of God and dying on the cross for my sins. It was easy for me to reject the word of God and let the world show me the way. With this type of attitude, you can imagine it didn't take long for me to have my first accident, driving down the road of self-destruction and misery. By



the age of ten I was stealing cars and being a rebellious fool. By the age of sixteen, I was hooked on drugs and alcohol.

I went to college, but I continued my drug habit and my lawlessness there. I had complete contempt for authority. In and out of prison, I tried to outsmart the legal system. Finally, in 1991, I ended up with two sentences of life without parole, and life was starting to look hopeless. I turned to God for deliverance, and amazingly I was blessed to be released early.

After being held in some of the most dangerous and violent prisons in the US, you would think I'd have learned my lesson. But in misguided pride, I picked up right where I had left off. I was arrested again on a serious felony charge and parole violation. The authorities told me the only plea bargain they would offer me was another term of life without parole.

In my fifties now, I knew that would mean I'd die in prison. I thought God surely would not rescue me this time around. For the first time in my life, I realized that Christ was the answer to my problems. I needed not just to get out of this mess I had made, but to be truly born again. I honestly surrendered

my will and turned my life over to the care of the Lord. I wanted another chance to return to society, but I doubted if I ever would.

Before long, God brought a number of Christians into my life who taught me the love of Christ. By some miracle, the system dismissed my criminal charges, and after I served a few more years, a very reluctant parole board granted me a second parole. I was united with my son, daughter, and grandchildren, most of whom I had never met, and I now reside in one of the most wonderfully run recovery homes in America. I simply let go and let God!

The lesson I want to share is that the worst type of imprisonment is to live a life without Christ. I pray each day, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me" (Psalm 51:10). God delivered me, and today I have no desire to use or to harm anyone, but only to live a godly life.

Christ said to believe and follow Him. Choosing to do that is the best decision I have ever made. The best place to spend eternity is in the kingdom of God. God is waiting on you. Please join me; you will be glad you did!



ALL I HAVE TO OFFER

Broken into a thousand pieces is my heart made of glass—
Shattered with no regard to the pain,
Seared into the leftover fragments,
Trampled time and time again,
No one cares or even notices.

This is all I have to offer.
Can You repair the damage that's been done?
Can You mend the pieces that are broken?
Can You put my glass heart back together again?

Loveless for so long,
Hopeless beyond recognition,
Mourning the losses of a lifetime;
Please take my humble offering.

You say it's damaged, but You can fix it.
You say it's broken, but You can make it whole again.
You say it's not much, but it's enough.
Lord, this is all I have to offer.

The pieces of my broken glass heart
That's been broken, shattered, and trampled on,
That's been without love, hope or gladness—
I give it all to You, almighty, powerful King!

So, Lord, I'm trusting you.
Only You can make me whole again.
Only You can mend my brokenness.
Only You can fill me with love and joy!

The Lord's Loving Arms

I was in trouble and bound in sin,
And Satan thought he had me because of the mindset I was in.
He tormented me day and night,
But one day I saw the great light.
It overcame the darkness in my life,
And His name is Jesus Christ!

Then He began to be with me day and night
Leading and guiding me through my new life;
I put off the old man and put on the new;
My life is so much better, all because of You.
You see, I'll never be the same
I'll never turn my back on You or deny You again.

I could be burning in hell
Because of who I was,
But You would not allow it.
You reached down from heaven above,
Wrapped Your loving arms around me
And filled me full of Your love.

Dedicated to the Lord and Savior of my life, Jesus Christ!

Timothy Savage
Bayou Dorcheat Correction Center, Minden, LA



—TESTIMONY— WASHED IN THE BLOOD


Merienne Blake, Lowell Correctional Institution, Gainesville, FL

As a sinner, I understand fully the need for mercy, grace, and forgiveness. With clearly evident stains of greed, lust, selfishness, and murder, I was thrown out and shamed by man. Since man is but flesh and God is sovereign, I had to make a choice. As I lifted up my blood-stained hands to the sky in a humble desire to be saved, I felt His arms circle around me in a warmth I had never felt before.

Locked in a county jail, facing a murder charge, in a makeshift church on a cold concrete floor, Jesus met me. He lifted me up and took my sin on the cross and

saved me. Now as I sit, washed by the precious blood of the Savior, I can lift my clean, spotless hands and face to the Lord in thanksgiving and rejoicing.

He hears me when I call. He is an almighty God, Friend, and Father. He does not want to condemn us because of our faults. He wants to free us because His compassion is deeper than any pit we can bury ourselves in. Raise your hands to Him; He's reaching out to you. Heed the call of precious love, mercy, peace, grace, and forgiveness. In His precious blood, you will be made clean. ~



God's compassion is deeper than any pit we can bury ourselves in.

Word Search Puzzle

Colossians 3:12–14

Find each word from this Bible passage in the puzzle. For an extra challenge, memorize the passage when you're done. Enjoy!

“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone.

Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

H Z C E Q R E A C H X O M H O L O B M
H S J V E A D U K Q U S Z X C Q E T K
M G G H X P B K D H S E M B E E T W G
F Z T D T U A E S T X E B Q V V U B E
R O W W T H V B O Y H Z V A T I G Y N
Y D R Y E O E Z I T N E G P H R O N T
O A P G L K F R A I C R A E E T I P L
U W N F I X R Q E N O H N R S U E E E
Q C T D Q V B N E F Y K O F E E O O N
I C H V C C E I K Z O S T E A S V P E
S L O L A S T V P U E R H C U D E L S
P O N M O A P A V V L L E T D G R E S
W T Y H P T R N L K T F R O W H I C H
M H C F U A A E S L H T A G A I N S T
K E B U N A S N M V G R I E V A N C E
W K F U P R H S D G B J O T H M U Z F
A H H W U B U N I T Y A N H O W O E V
E I U O T B A Y L O C G F E L C N G V
M V Y M E K W F L O N N R R Y O E O V
U W I X I F I R A I V A T H E R W D M
W I T H K L T N E V E U S M W F N S T
B I P K Q Y I V D B O L O R D A U T I
H N T J W L I T Z N S S I Z E O I L H
A L L H P G V A Y D E A R L Y X S O Q
S Y H F R G T S N B F S B I D W Z V K
Q U F O Z T A I Y S H W S D A Q P E U
A O F S C J B J H A L W Y P Q F Y M D



CORRIE TEN BOOM ON FORGIVENESS

In this story from November 1972,
the author of *The Hiding Place* recalls forgiving a guard
at the concentration camp where her sister died.

It was in a church in Munich that I saw him, a balding heavysset man in a gray overcoat, a brown felt hat clutched between his hands. People were filing out of the basement room where I had just spoken, moving along the rows of wooden chairs to the door at the rear.

It was 1947, and I had come from Holland to defeated Germany with the message that God forgives.

It was the truth they needed most to hear in that bitter, bombed-out land, and I gave them my favorite mental picture. Maybe because the sea is never far from a Hollander's mind, I liked to think that that's where forgiven sins were thrown.

"When we confess our sins," I said, "God casts them into the deepest ocean, gone forever."

The solemn faces stared back at me, not quite daring to believe. There were never questions after a talk in Germany in 1947. People stood up in silence, in silence collected their wraps, in silence left the room.

And that's when I saw him, working his way forward against the others. One moment I saw the overcoat and the brown hat; the next, a blue uniform and a visored cap with its skull and crossbones.

It came back with a rush: the huge room with its harsh

One moment I saw the overcoat and the brown hat; the next, a blue uniform and a visored cap with its skull and crossbones.

overhead lights, the pathetic pile of dresses and shoes in the center of the floor, the shame of walking naked past this man. I could see my sister's frail form ahead of me, ribs sharp beneath the parchment skin. Betsie, how thin you were!

Betsie and I had been arrested for concealing Jews in our home during the Nazi occupation of Holland; this man had been a guard at Ravensbrück concentration camp where we were sent.

Now he was in front of me, hand thrust out: "A fine message, *fräulein*! How good it is to know that, as you say, all our sins are at the bottom of the sea!"

And I, who had spoken so glibly of forgiveness, fumbled in my pocketbook rather than take that hand. He would not remember me, of course—how could he remember one prisoner among those thousands of women?

But I remembered him and the leather crop swinging from his belt. It was the first time since my release that I had been face to face with one of my captors, and my blood seemed to freeze.

"You mentioned Ravensbrück in your talk," he was saying. "I was a guard in there." No, he did not remember me.

"But since that time," he went on, "I have become a Christian. I know that God has forgiven me for the cruel things I did there, but I would like to hear it from your lips as well. *Fräulein*"—again the hand came out—"will you forgive me?"

And I stood there—I whose sins had every day to be forgiven—and could not. Betsie had died in that place—could he erase her slow terrible death simply for the asking?

It could not have been many seconds that he stood there, hand held out; but to me it seemed hours as I wrestled with the most difficult thing I had ever had to do.

For I had to do it—I knew that. The message that God forgives has a prior condition: that we forgive those who have injured us. "If you do not forgive men their trespasses," Jesus says, "neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses."

I knew it not only as a commandment of God, but as a daily experience. Since the end of the war, I had had a home in Holland for victims of Nazi brutality.

Those who were able to forgive their former enemies were able also to return to the outside world and rebuild their lives, no

matter what the physical scars. Those who nursed their bitterness remained invalids. It was as simple and as horrible as that.

And still I stood there with the coldness clutching my heart. But forgiveness is not an emotion—I knew that too. Forgiveness is an act of the will, and the will can function regardless of the temperature of the heart.

“Jesus, help me!” I prayed silently. “I can lift my hand. I can do that much. You supply the feeling.”

And so woodenly, mechanically, I thrust my hand into the one stretched out to me. And as I did, an incredible thing took place. The current started in my shoulder, raced down my arm, sprang into our joined hands. And then this healing warmth seemed to flood my whole being, bringing tears to my eyes.

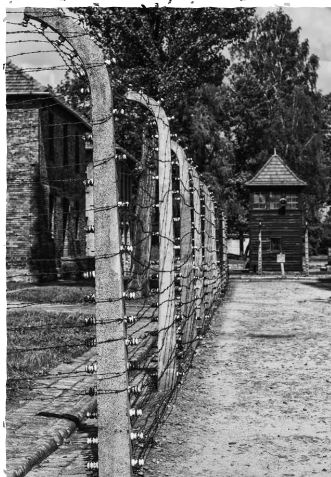
“I forgive you, brother!” I cried. “With all my heart!”

For a long moment we grasped each other’s hands, the former guard and the former prisoner. I had never known God’s love so intensely as I did then.

And having thus learned to forgive in this hardest of situations, I never again had difficulty in forgiving: I wish I could say it! I wish I could say that merciful and charitable thoughts just

naturally flowed from me from then on. But they didn’t.

If there’s one thing I’ve learned at 80 years of age, it’s that I can’t store up good feelings and behavior—but only draw them fresh from God each day.



We grasped each other’s hands, the former guard and the former prisoner. I had never known God’s love so intensely as I did then.

Maybe I’m glad it’s that way. For every time I go to Him, He teaches me something else. I recall the time, some fifteen years ago, when some Christian friends whom I loved and

trusted did something which hurt me.

You would have thought that, having forgiven the Nazi guard, this would have been child's play. It wasn't. For weeks I seethed inside. But at last I asked God again to work His miracle in me. And again it happened: first the cold-blooded decision, then the flood of joy and peace.

I had forgiven my friends; I was restored to my Father.

Then why was I suddenly awake in the middle of the night, hashing over the whole affair again? My *friends!* I thought. *People I loved!* If it had been strangers, I wouldn't have minded so.

I sat up and switched on the light. "Father, I thought it was all forgiven! Please help me do it!"

But the next night I woke up again. They'd talked so sweetly too! Never a hint of what they were planning. "Father!" I cried in alarm. "Help me!"

His help came in the form of a kindly Lutheran pastor to whom I confessed my failure after two sleepless weeks.

"Up in that church tower," he said, nodding out the window, "is a bell which is rung by pulling on a rope. But you know what? After the sexton lets go of the rope, the bell keeps on swinging. First *ding* then *dong*. Slower and slower until there's a final *dong* and it stops.

"I believe the same thing is true of forgiveness. When we forgive someone, we take our hand off the rope. But if we've been tugging at our grievances for a long time, we mustn't be surprised if the old angry thoughts keep coming for a while. They're just the ding-dongs of the old bell slowing down."

And so it proved to be. There were a few more midnight reverberations, a couple of dings when the subject came up in my conversation. But the force—which was my willingness in the matter—had gone out of them. They came less and less often and at last stopped altogether.

And so I discovered another secret of forgiveness: that we

"Forgiveness is the key that unlocks the door of resentment and the handcuffs of hatred. It is a power that breaks the chains of bitterness and the shackles of selfishness."

—Corrie ten Boom

“Lord Jesus,” I whispered at last,
“who takes all my sins away, forgive me for preserving
all these years the evidence against others!”

can trust God not only above our emotions, but also above our thoughts.

And still He had more to teach me, even in this single episode. Because many years later, in 1970, an American with whom I had shared the ding-dong principle came to visit me in Holland and met the people involved. “Aren’t those the friends who let you down?” he asked as they left my apartment.

“Yes,” I said a little smugly. “You can see it’s all forgiven.”

“By you, yes,” he said. “But what about them? Have they accepted your forgiveness?”

“They say there’s nothing to forgive! They deny it ever happened. But I can prove it!” I went eagerly to my desk. “I have it in black and white! I saved all their letters and I can show you where—”

“Corrie!” My friend slipped his arm through mine and gently closed the drawer. “Aren’t you the one whose sins are at the bottom of the sea? And are the sins of your friends etched in black and white?”

For an anguished moment I could not find my voice. “Lord Jesus,” I whispered at last, “who takes all my sins away, forgive me for preserving all these years the evidence against others! Give me grace to burn all the blacks and whites as a sweet-smelling sacrifice to Your glory.”

I did not go to sleep that night until I had gone through my desk and pulled out those letters, curling now with age, and fed them all into my little coal-burning grate. As the flames leaped and glowed, so did my heart.

“Forgive us our trespasses,” Jesus taught us to pray, “as we forgive those who trespass against us.” In the ashes of those letters I was seeing yet another facet of His mercy. What more He would teach me about forgiveness in the days ahead I didn’t know, but tonight’s lesson was good news enough.

When we bring our sins to Jesus, He not only forgives them, He makes them as if they had never been. ~

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Where Are the Men?

Denny Kenaston

"I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one."

Ezekiel 22:30

God needs men. All through the pages of the Bible, we see the Lord looking for men to lead His people. The early church was filled with godly men who were true leaders. As prophesied in Psalms 68:11: "The Lord gave the word; great was the company of those who proclaimed it."

This word *company* refers to an *army*. Picture it—a whole army of men prophesying! That is the way it was in the days of the early church.

Yes, God is searching for men, dedicated men who will deny themselves to serve their God. His eyes go to and fro throughout the whole earth, seeking

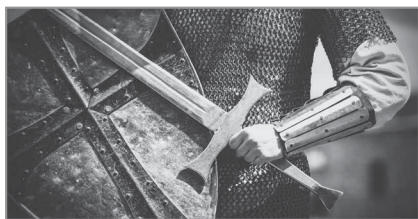
men with upright hearts. But where are those men? The title of this chapter is more than a question; it is a clarion call to the men. Opportunities are everywhere, but where are the men?

Paul said to Timothy, "And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also" (2 Timothy 2:2).

.....

Denny Kenaston and his wife, Jackie, were delivered by God from the drugs, drunkenness, and immorality of the 1970's hippie culture. From that time until his death in 2012, Denny devoted much of his energy to igniting a vision for godly homes based on Christ-centered, Biblical principles. This is a selection from his book, *The Pursuit of Godly Seed*, where he shares what he learned during many years of serving as pastor and raising a godly family.

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God is searching for dedicated men who will deny themselves to serve Him.

This verse refers to four generations of leaders: Paul is the first, Timothy is the second, the “faithful men” are the third, and the “others also” are the fourth. It was through faithful men like these that God propagated the faith from one generation to the next in the early church. Church history shows us that Timothy did find faithful men, and those faithful men did commit the things they learned to others also.

A Burden Is Born

The words, “Where are the men?” and the burden behind the words began to dawn on my heart over twenty years ago, and it is still a pressing need in the church. In our travels, my wife and I often find ourselves sitting with couples in their homes. In

many of these homes, we find lots of questions and a real spiritual hunger in the ladies, while the men seem to be sadly lacking in spiritual fervor, interest, and desire. The men are there, yet not there. They are filling their positions, but not their role as leaders.

Dear men, you hold in your hand the knowledge and wisdom to transform your whole life. God’s Word is powerful. Maybe you are feeling a bit dejected right now as you come to grips with where you are with God and your family. God can change it all, my brother; rise up and believe. Your good choices now will affect your children to the third and fourth generation.



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For Judgment, God Takes Away the Leaders

“Where are the men?” There are probably a few answers to this question, but I believe we have a couple of answers in Isaiah 3:

“For behold, the Lord, the Lord of hosts, takes away from Jerusalem and from Judah the stock and the store, the whole supply of bread and the whole supply of water; the mighty man and the man of war, the judge and the prophet, and the diviner and the elder; the captain of fifty and the honorable man, the counselor and the skillful artisan, and the expert enchanter. ‘I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them’” (Isaiah 3:1–4).

When men turn away from God and His ways, God judges them and their families by taking precious spiritual things away from them. This is connected to the principle stated in the New Testament as “For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required” (Luke 12:48). If you do not use God’s blessings for his glory, God may take them away; but if you use them well, God will add more.

These are some interesting verses in light of our question,

“Where are the men?” I believe Isaiah 3 offers some answers to this question. Israel (specifically, the men of Israel) had turned away from God. They turned away from God’s ways and God’s voice through the prophets. In judgment, He took away their leaders. The eloquent preachers, the fair-minded judges, the problem-solvers, and the wise old men, were gone. No one was left to rule but children.

This sounds like America to me. I think the references to “children” and “babes” refer not to literal babies, but rather to young men who should be following wise older men. Verse five goes on to prophesy how “The child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient.” The whole description reminds me of America. Instead of being led by the wisdom of the “ancients,” our culture encourages us to dump all the ancients in the rest homes and forget about them. As these role models disappear, youth grow up with no idea what leadership looks like, and too often they are afraid to step up and take responsibility.

We need men with the life of God burning in them, who are willing to take the risk and lead. We need men who are willing to discipline themselves to pray,

read the Word, and get some fresh bread to give to everyone else. Few want that responsibility; it is too much work.

Then the Women Fill In

When men turn away from God and His ways, God takes away their anointing. He strips them of their spiritual authority and leaves them devoid of wisdom. He takes away their internal strength, and there they stand, trying to be husbands, fathers, and church leaders, without the goods. The children turn against their fathers, authority is distorted, and leadership is lacking.

Amid this chaos, the women step in and try to fill in the gaps. I wonder how many times I've heard women say, "Should I just step in and do it? My husband won't have devotions, but he doesn't mind if I have them." My heart hurts for such mothers and their children. They want to have the proper respect for Daddy, but he is like a tire without air. I tell such sisters carefully, "Hey, if he doesn't mind you having devotions, then go for it!" But at the same time I'm thinking, "Brother, wake up! Why don't you get some bread to give to your children?"

Why should the wife be forced to lead the family, being careful not to hurt her husband's ego? That father ought to hang his head in shame, repent, and turn back to God.

Many of us grew up with fathers who didn't know how to lead, because their fathers didn't know how to lead. Now, here we are, and many of us don't have a clue how to lead our families. I am not blaming you men, I'm just saying that this is the situation in which we find ourselves. Many of us are not the leaders we ought to be. Brethren, we have got to break the chain! We must shake this thing off! We need to get honest with ourselves and acknowledge the need of our hearts. In the words of the hymn, we need to "Rise up, O men of God!" and "Have done with lesser things."

How many times I have seen the tears of a woman as she asked, "How can I help my husband be a spiritual leader? He is a good provider, he has given us a good home to live in, and he pays the bills, but he won't take any leadership."

I try to give them the right counsel. I tell them, "Sister, you get in your place, learn how to pray, and honor your husband." But I must admit I sometimes

cringe inside when I give that counsel. Dear brothers, it isn't right to tell the sisters all the humbling things they should do if you aren't going to take the lead the way you should. It isn't right to expect your wife to overlook all your failings and keep giving honor if you aren't willing to change as well. When are we going to wake up and get right with God?

Again and again I see sisters who are quick to break their hearts and confess needs, but men who are very slow to do the same. Paying the bills and providing a home for your family is important, but it is not enough. It takes a spiritual man to provide real leadership. Do we think we are so spiritual that we don't need to confess—or are we just too proud?

Maybe it is time to have an old-fashioned revival meeting at home where the father sits down with the family and says, "I've failed! I've failed! I've failed! I've put everything else ahead of you. I haven't put God first in my life. Please forgive me."

Leaders Raise Leaders

There were days in the history of Israel when the nation was full of leaders. Have you ever read the list of David's mighty men? There is quite a hall of fame listed in 2 Samuel 23. David was an anointed leader, and leaders produce leaders. This principle works, whether it is with a father and his sons or a military leader and his men. This is the reason there were so many leaders in the nation of Israel at one time. The men of Israel were leaders; their sons grew up to be leaders; even their servants became leaders.

Brethren, we need to have a personal revival in our hearts and take our places as leaders in our homes. This will produce a generation of young men who can become leaders. You see, when a boy grows up in a home where Dad is a leader, he catches the spirit of leadership.

God is seeking men today. He is looking for men who are willing to stand in the gaps. This begins at home. Many men aspire to the public work

God's work begins at home.

of God, and I thank God for every one of them, but we must remember that God's work begins at home. At home, many of you already have a house full of waiting disciples. You may have a wife who needs nurture. This is your training ground for future ministry.

God wants each of you men to become mature. A mature man is a man who has learned to walk with God, and who is sensitive to the Spirit of God. A mature man is filled with the convictions of the Word of God. Nobody needs to tell him what to do; he does the right thing by conviction, out of his own heart's desire.

A mature man is a man who makes and keeps commitments to God; he has learned to walk in the light. As God gave him light, he said *yes* and obeyed, doing whatever he knew to be right. Then God gave him more light, and he said *yes* again. As the years went by he kept on saying *yes* to the will of God, and he matured. This kind of man is "able to teach others also."

A mature man has learned to handle his finances. It is God's will that you become financially stable. For some of you, that means making major changes in order to get out of

debt, especially consumer debt, such as credit cards. Becoming financially stable to whatever degree it is possible is part of true leadership.



A Church Full of Godly Men

Now, let's dream a bit. All these thoughts about leaders stir my heart. What if all of us men would get serious about this whole matter of leadership? What a powerful church that would make—a whole church full of men who are sold out to God and walking in leadership. That would be an apostolic church, like the early church in the days of the apostles.

Maybe you think this standard is too high, but consider for a moment. The description of a mature man given in 1 Timothy 3 are the biblical requirements for church leaders. I believe all of us men should be aspiring to take our



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place as leaders in the church. That means we should all be working on meeting these requirements. We should be mature men who walk with God, living by our convictions, achieving financial stability, keeping our children in order, and leading our wives in faithfulness. In time, this will give us churches full of godly leaders.

It ought to be the normal thing for the church to be filled with men of God. The church should be filled with prophets, teachers, exhorters, evange-

lists, and men of wisdom who can lead. Today, most churches have one or two dynamic men in them, while the rest just sit there in the pews. This is not the way the New Testament church should work. May God give every family a man of God for a daddy. All children should have a papa who leads his family to God by word and example. Where are these men?

God Honors Men

From the beginning of creation God gave men a special place in His order. He made Adam the king of the earth and put him in charge of everything. God has ordained that the church and the home are to be led by men. This is a heavy responsibility, and I think we men need to wake up to it.

Brethren, where much is given, much is required. I have often said to people as they were struggling with being under authority, "I would rather be under authority than in authority any day, because of the heavy load of responsibility that falls upon you when you're in authority." The mantle has fallen on us. God is calling us in this hour to rise up and stand in the gap. We are the men. ~

The Christ of the Andes

by Elizabeth Hershberger Bauman

Once again, men talked of war in Argentina. This time the quarrel was about the boundary line between Argentina and Chile, high in the Andes Mountains. The Chilean government thought the boundary line should be at the place where the mountains divide the water, making some rivers flow east and some flow west, but this boundary took in certain fertile plains on the Argentine side of the range. Argentina thought the boundary should run along the highest peaks, leaving the plains to them. Year after year, the countries quarreled about the boundary line, and year after year they became more and more angry. In 1898 they began to build battleships and raise large armies in preparation for war.

President Roca did not want his country to fight Chile. He thought of the great cattle ranches and the vast wheat fields. He thought of the huge stretches of corn and oats and alfalfa and the vineyards near

the foothills of the mountains. They were among the finest in the world. They were making his country rich. President Roca also knew that if Argentina spent all its money for an army, it would soon become very poor.

"We must do something to stop this trouble before it is too late," he thought.

Someone else did not want Argentina to go to war. Bishop Benavente (Bĕn-a-vĕn'tĕ) knew it would make his country poor, and he also knew it was wrong to kill others. Earnestly he told the people of Buenos Aires that war was wicked.

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more angry.*

"Let us be friendly to our neighbors," he said. "We don't want war."

This surprised the people of Buenos Aires. Some of them did not agree with Bishop Benavente, but others thought to themselves, “He is right. Could we not settle this without war?”

The bishop traveled up and down the country day after day, telling people, “We do not need war to settle our quarrel. Let us do it peacefully and be friends.”

News of what Bishop Benavente was saying leaked across the border to Chile. Soon a Chilean bishop started up and down *his* country asking *his* people, “Couldn’t we settle this quarrel without war? War is sin.”

Before long many people in both countries realized that it is wrong to hate others. The women begged their husbands not to join the army. Finally, so many people wanted peace that they sent messages to their presidents saying, “Let us decide our quarrel peacefully. We don’t want war.”

Great Britain was interested in Argentina because many British people were living there. Great Britain offered to help Argentina and Chile decide where the boundary line should be. Both countries agreed to accept Britain’s decision.

As soon as King Edward VII decided this question, Chile sold their warships and paid

their debts. There was even some money left to improve the country, and a few years later Chile built a railroad across the mountains to Argentina.

Argentina and Chile were glad they did not need to go to war to settle their quarrel. “We ought to remember this happy solution in some special way,” they said.

So both countries brought their old bronze cannons to the arsenal at Buenos Aires. There the metal was melted and a great artist worked day after day, shaping it into a beautiful statue of Christ. The people wanted a statue of Jesus, the true peacemaker, to remind them of their peace with each other.

The people waited eagerly for the day the statue would be finished. As they waited, they thought about a place for it to stand. Why not place it high on a mountain pass at the border, where it could be seen from both countries? There it would remind everyone that peace is stronger than war. Years before, at the pass of La Cumbre, a little stone house had been built in which travelers could find protection from the cold as they crossed the mountains. Surely, this would be a wonderful place for the beautiful statue of the Man who loved peace.

Finally, in March 1904, the Christ of the Andes was finished and ready to go to its new home on the highest peak in the Andes Mountains. It traveled 654 miles by train, then mules pulled it on up the steep mountain road. When the wild mountainside became too rugged even for mules, hundreds of soldiers and sailors from both Argentina and Chile pulled it the rest of the way with ropes.

In the meantime thousands of people were making preparations to go to the Andes to see the statue and celebrate together. Some traveled many weeks to get there. Others camped beside the mountain for days waiting for the dedication day to come.

At last, on March 13, the excited crowd gathered. First, the people from Argentina stepped across the boundary line into Chile. Then the people from Chile stepped across into Argentina. Then everyone looked toward the statue that stood between them. There, standing huge and tall on a round pedestal representing the world, was the beautiful figure of Christ. In His left hand He held a cross. His right hand was stretched out as if He were blessing the three thousand people who had come to celebrate. At the

bottom of the statue were these words:

“Sooner shall these mountains crumble to dust than Argentines and Chileans break the peace which at the feet of Christ the Redeemer they have sworn to maintain.”



The people wanted a statue of Jesus, the true peacemaker, to remind them of their peace with each other.

Cannons roared and bands played. The sound echoed and re-echoed through the mountains. When the last note died away in the distance, Bishop Anoud (Än'ōöd) said, "We dedicate this monument to Argentina and Chile and to the whole world. May we learn its lesson of peace."

Then as the people bowed their heads, the Archbishop of Argentina prayed:

"Protect, Lord, our country. Ever give unto us faith and hope. Let our first inheritance be the peace which shall bear fruit, and let its fine example be its greatest glory, so that the souls of those who have known Thee shall be able to bring forth from Thee all forms of blessing for the two Americas. Amen." ~

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- **The message of the writing should be clear and focused, not rambling from subject to subject.**
- **The writing should be consistent with the truth of the Bible.**
- **If you write your Christian testimony, it should not focus on your sinful past or your attempts at self-improvement, but on God's redemptive work in your life.**

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Man of Sorrows

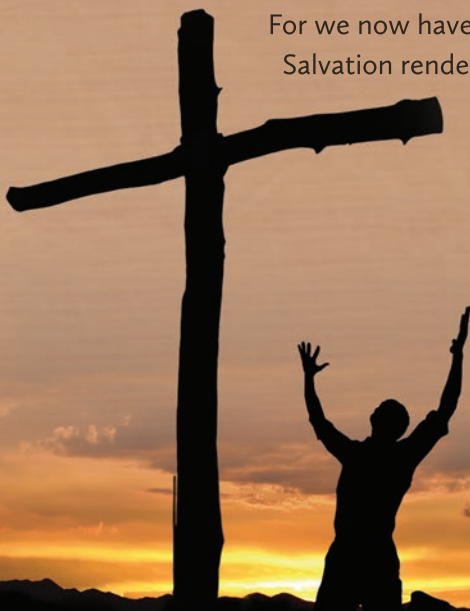
Did you know the price was paid,
When on Christ your sin was laid?
Did you know He has made intercession
For all mankind and their transgression?

He was despised and rejected,
Crucified and resurrected.
On the cross He died quite slow,
Did you know? Did you know?

Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows;
He was wounded for our transgressions;
He was bruised for our iniquities.
The chastisement of our peace was upon Him;
And with His stripes we are healed (see Isaiah 53:4–5).

Though on the cross He suffered grief,
Yet through death He brought relief.
For we now have hope for our tomorrows—
Salvation rendered by the Man of Sorrows.

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Holmes Correctional Institution,
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**“Put on tender mercies, kindness, humility,
meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one
another, and forgiving one another... even as
Christ forgave you, so you also must do.”**

Colossians 3:12–13

