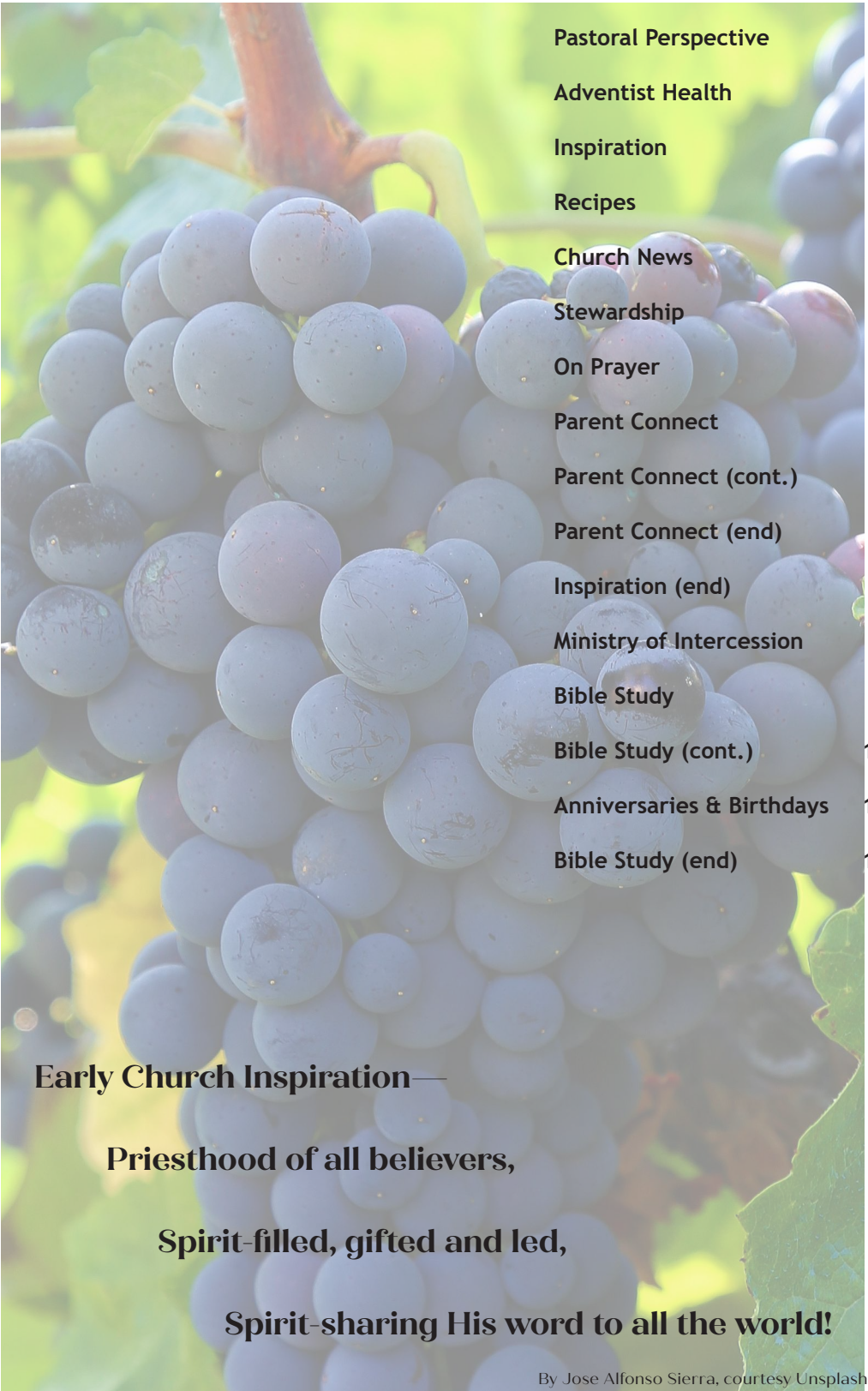


WISDOM & BRAINCELLS

Our Life Source Connection—John 15:4-5

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Early Church Inspiration—

Priesthood of all believers,

Spirit-filled, gifted and led,

Spirit-sharing His word to all the world!

By Jose Alfonso Sierra, courtesy Unsplash

Pastoral Perspective

The Missing Power

by Pastor Mercado

In the last couple of months we have been talking about our responsibility as a church to proclaim the everlasting gospel. We have a great responsibility and task as Jesus said that “The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few” (Matt 9:37).

We have been reminded that being a Seventh-day Adventist is an honor and a privilege since it is God’s end-time remnant people. You might think that as SDA’s we would be doing great things for the advancement of God’s agenda. You might think that our own church would be growing by leaps and bounds. Unfortunately, that is not what is happening. In fact, one of the remnants of COVID will be the loss of both fervor and members. What is going on? What is missing?

In the last meeting Jesus had with his disciples, he told them not to go because he knew something was still missing in their lives, and without it they would not be able to accomplish the mission He had set before them. Jesus had “commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now” (Acts 1:4-5).

The disciples had been with Jesus 3 ½ years. They were trained by the Son of God and had been witnesses of everything He did. You would have thought that they were ready to take over the world for Jesus, but He didn’t think they were ready, they were missing an important ingredient, as it were. They were missing the power!

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). The Greek word used to describe this power is “dunamis,” which is the root word for “dynamite.” The power that Jesus was promising his followers wasn’t a “simple power.” It was a dynamite power! A power strong enough to cause an explosion in the world.

Why did Jesus offer such power to his disciples? Because only dumanis power, which comes from the Holy Spirit, is alone able to help us be effective in witnessing for Jesus. Without dunamis power, our expectations will be low, and we won’t be an effective witness for Jesus. Is dunamis our missing ingredient?

Based on what is happening and not happening around us, I think we can answer with a resounding YES! We are in need of the Holy Spirit in our individual lives and in the life of our church.

I remember reading a statement that intrigued me, “You never have to advertise a fire. Everyone comes running when there is a fire. Likewise, if your church is on fire, you will not have to advertise it. the community will already know it.” We are missing the fire because we are missing the power, the Holy Spirit. How do we get the Holy Spirit? Ask Jesus, “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!” (Luke 11:13). I encourage you to plead for the Holy Spirit every day, and the fire will come.



Adversity is the first path to truth.

—Lord Byron

Adventist Health

Joy

by Marjie Johns

I started reading a devotional book about joy this past week and it has given me much food for thought.

Although I have read this text many a time, I’m looking at it with new thoughts.

“As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.” Proverbs 23:7 Just like a healthy body produces energy, a healthy mind produces joy.

And joy is the sum and substance of emotional health! Joy is a state of mind that needs to be purposely cultivated. It’s simple, but also hard — I need to consistently think joy-producing thoughts.

I am free to choose what I think about. Wow! That’s a powerful thought — free to choose what I think about!



And, what I dwell on, doesn’t have to be affected by my outward circumstances.

It’s too easy for me to take my mind to unhappy and negative thoughts. After reading this devotional this past week, I am committing to—

- Think compassionate thoughts, not harsh thoughts;
- Think loving thoughts, not indifferent thoughts;
- Think constructive thoughts, not destructive;
- Think helpful thoughts, not hurtful thoughts;
- Think faith thoughts, not fear thoughts;
- Think giving thoughts, not getting thoughts;
- Think positive thoughts, not negative thoughts;
- Think about the promises of God, not the problems of this world.

I will pray that this week you experience a joy-filled week.



Inspiration

The Pursuit of God

by A. W. Tozer

Following Hard after God

My soul followeth hard after thee: thy right hand upholdeth me. — Psa. 63:8

Christian theology teaches the doctrine of prevenient grace, which briefly stated means this, that before a man can seek God, God must first have sought the man. . .

We pursue God because, and only because, He has first put an urge within us that spurs us to the pursuit. “No man can come to me,” said our Lord, “except the Father which hath sent me draw him,”^b and it is by this very prevenient drawing that God takes from us every vestige of credit for the act of coming. The impulse to pursue God originates with God, but the outworking of that impulse is our following hard after Him; and all the time we are pursuing Him we are already in His hand: “Thy right hand upholdeth me.” . .

The modern scientist has lost God amid the wonders of His world; we Christians are in real danger of losing God amid the wonders of His Word. We have almost forgotten that God is a Person and, as such, can be cultivated as any person can. It is inherent in personality to be able to know other personalities, but full knowledge of one personality by another cannot be achieved in one encounter. It is only after long and loving mental intercourse that the full possibilities of both can be explored.

All social intercourse between human beings is a response of personality to personality, grading upward from the most casual brush between man and man to the fullest, most intimate communion of which the human soul is capable. Religion, so far as it is genuine, is in essence the response of created personalities to the Creating Personality, God. “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”

God is a Person, and in the deep of His mighty nature He thinks, wills, enjoys, feels, loves, desires and suffers as any other person may. In making Himself known to us He stays by (to page 7)

VEGETARIAN

Recipes

Selections by Charlotte Hardy. Send recipes to charlottehardy@comcast.net, or, text (615) 974-0191 by 3rd Sunday of each month. Thank you.

From Nathalie Desruisseaux's Kitchen

Cashew Sunflower Mayo

Ingredients

- 1 cup cashews
- ¼ cup sunflower seeds
- ½ cup lemon juice
- ½ medium peeled onion
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup water

Directions

- Blend together and serve



From Michelle Hite's Kitchen

Nacho Cheese Sauce

Ingredients (makes <5 cups)

- 2 cups potatoes, cubed
- 1 cup carrots, cubed
- 1 cup chopped onions
- ½ cup cashews
- 2 ¼ cups unsweetened plain soy milk
- 1/3 cup nutritional yeast
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- ½ tsp Smoked Sweet Paprika
- ¼ tsp Chipotle Pepper Powder
- 1 tsp salt (optional)

Directions

- Simmer potatoes, carrots, onion and cashews in the soy milk over a medium heat for 10-15 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender.
- Transfer veggies and milk to a blender and add the nutritional yeast, lemon juice, mustard and spices. Blend on high for 15 seconds.
- Serve as a dip straight up.
- Add spicy tomatoes to make it into a Queso.
- Use it to drizzle over enchiladas, burritos or nachos.
- Top with your favorite salsa and enjoy.

Ω

Stewardship

by Brian & Raylene Wilcox

Very few individuals can write a check for \$10,000 when a special need for the local church or foreign mission project is presented. While you may not be able to give a once-in-a-lifetime donation of \$10,000, if you faithfully and consistently give on a regular basis, you will give far more in the long term. For example, let's say your monthly household income is \$3,000. You and your family have decided you will give an offering of 5% for the local church above and beyond the 10% for tithe. That 5% offering comes to \$150 per month and \$1,800 over the course of a year. Take that out to a working lifetime, of say, forty years, and you will have contributed \$72,000!

The secret to contributing generously is not the spur-of-the-moment or one big chunk at a time donation. It is regular and systematic giving.

"God has devised a plan by which all may give as He has prospered them, and which will make a habit without waiting for special calls. Until all shall carry out the plan of systematic benevolence, there will be a failure in coming up to the apostolic rule." Testimonies, Vol. 3, page 411.

Building Refurbishing & Remodeling fund update: Goal \$250,000

Donations through May 2021: \$64,523

Ω

**Report for May 2021
Recommended Giving Percentage above tithe 3-5%**

Income	\$10,675.51	Income to Date	\$59,872.28
Outgo	9,064.47	Outgo to Date	45,535.64
Balance	\$1,611.04	Balance to Date	\$14,336.64

Church News

June Decisions

Minister of Music

The board has begun a search for the possible hiring of a minister of music with input from the conference.

Baptism

Kensely Oben Desruisseaux will be baptized July 24. Plan to attend and welcome him.

New Prayer Ministry Leader

June Moore will be our new Prayer Ministry leader. Thanks, June for being willing to serve.

Repairs

The board approved hiring a firm to repair the water leaks to the walls and chimney. The upper window frames also need attention.

Evangelistic Opportunities

Lifeline Screening will come to our church Wednesday, October 13.

ALIVE Hospice will be offering a Grief 101 class in

our church in the near future. It will be a basic class helping attendees become aware of the resources available in our community. This is at no cost to our church. Date and time will be forthcoming.

VBS is tentatively scheduled for August 6-8. A firm date and more details will be available in the near future.

Family Retreat Oct. 15-17

At Cedars of Lebanon and led by Pastor & Lucy Mercado. More details on rates and particulars to follow.

Madison Academy Nov. 6

The academy will have our worship service on November 6.

Fellowship Meals

The pastor shared he hopes we can begin our Sabbath meals in the near future. It may only be once a month to begin with but keep a heads up on that in future weekly church announcements.

Ω

On Prayer

The Possibilities of Prayer, Ch. 1, para. 1-6

by E. M. Bounds

The Ministry of Prayer

THE ministry of prayer has been the peculiar distinction of all of God's saints. This has been the secret of their power. The energy and the soul of their work has been the closet. The need of help outside of man being so great, man's natural inability to always judge kindly, justly, and truly, and to act the Golden Rule, so prayer is enjoined by Christ to enable man to act in all these things according to the Divine will. By prayer, the ability is secured to feel the law of love, to speak according to the law of love, and to do everything in harmony with the law of love.

God can help us. God is a Father. We need God's good things to help us to "do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before God." We need Divine aid to act brotherly, wisely, and nobly, and to judge truly, and charitably. God's help to do all these things in God's way is secured by prayer. "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

In the marvelous output of Christian graces and duties, the result of giving ourselves wholly to God, recorded in the twelfth chapter of Romans, we have the words, "Continuing instant in prayer," preceded by "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation," followed by, "Distributing to the necessity of the saints, given to hospitality." Paul thus writes as if these rich and rare

graces and unselfish duties, so sweet, bright, generous, and unselfish, had for their center and source the ability to pray.

This is the same word which is used of the prayer of the disciples which ushered in Pentecost with all of its rich and glorious blessings of the Holy Spirit. In Colossians, Paul presses the word into the service of prayer again, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving." The word in its background and root means strong, the ability to stay, and persevere steadfast, to hold fast and firm, to give constant attention to.



By Ben White, Creative Commons, Unsplash

In Acts, chapter six, it is translated, "Give ourselves continually to prayer." There is in it constancy, courage, unfainting perseverance. It means giving such marked attention to, and such deep concern to a thing, as will make it conspicuous and controlling.

This is an advance in demand on "continue." Prayer is to be incessant, without intermission, assiduously, no check in desire, in spirit or in act, the spirit and the life always in the attitude of prayer. The knees may not always be bended, the lips may not always be vocal with words of prayer, but the spirit is always in the act and intercourse of prayer.

Ω

Parent Connect

by Junlan Funez

BIBLE STORY:

God saved Daniel's three friends from the fiery furnace. (Daniel 3)

BIBLE PHRASE:

There is no other God who can deliver like this. (Daniel 3:29)

BIBLE TRUTH:

God is in control, and He will protect me.

I heard of a Chinese song named "the Gift of Knowing You" by Stream of Praise that literally

translated to "The most beautiful blessing of this life is to be able to know the Lord Jesus. The richest blessing of this life is to be able to trust in the Lord Jesus. As I walk through the deep valleys and the high mountains, He is there with me. I know this is the most beautiful blessing of my life."

It seems Satan never stops attacking us—there are trials and tribulations of all sizes in every day of our lives. As we are trapped amid a fierce trial, do we as parents remember to model faith for our children? This reminds me of my favorite Bible story of the fiery furnace.

Parent Connect (cont.)

The story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace is as familiar to many as it is dramatic. These were young Hebrew men living as exiles in Babylon after Judah was conquered by King Nebuchadnezzar. They had risen to positions of power in the Babylonian court, but when the king asked them to worship an idol, they refused. King Nebuchadnezzar then had them thrown into a fiery furnace, but God delivered them and demonstrated His sovereignty over all nations. This story illustrates the power of awe-inspiring faith and the love of God, who walks in the midst of fire with us through our trials.

HOW TO HELP GROW FAITH IN OUR CHILDREN

While it is exciting to tell the dramatic story of God's rescue of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego to our children to teach them about the power of faith, it is unlikely that our children will experience events such as this in their daily life to grow their own faith. How do we as parents instill solid, character-building, faith-growing practices in the daily habits of our children?

According to Holly Crawshaw at theparentcue.org, there are four skills that every kid can learn and practice to help them grow in their faith:

HEAR: Listen to God's Word. When we read the Bible and listen to what God has to tell us through His word, we learn we can trust God no matter what.

PRAY: Dialogue with God. Through prayer we connect with God. We show gratitude, say we're sorry, and express our feelings to God.

TALK: Articulate our faith.

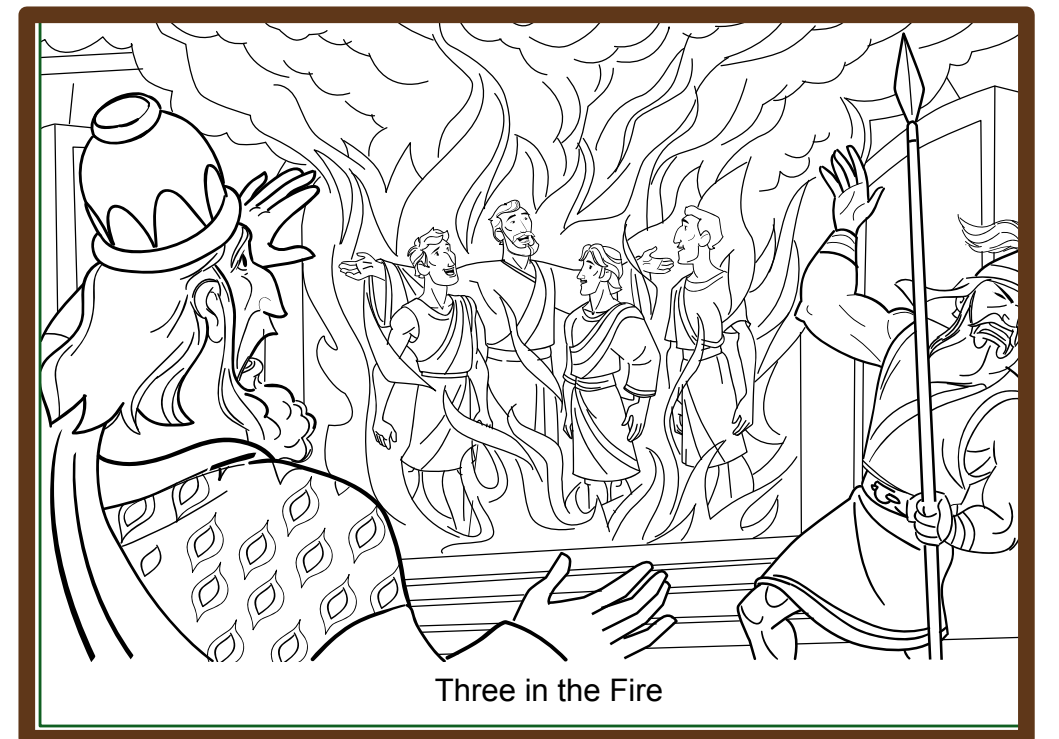
When we talk about our faith, we learn more about God and can tell others about Jesus.

LIVE: Worship with our life. Worshiping God is more than just singing songs. Worship is about living life in a way that honors God. So how do we make these four practices daily habits for our kids? Holly Crawshaw shares a few tips:

1. There is no better time than now to start. It's never too late or too early to start practicing faith in the daily life of our kids. God has a way of gracefully filling in the gaps.
2. You don't have to have all the answers. When it comes to questions about faith, it is alright to say you don't have all the answers. Learn and build faith together with your child. Other great responses are, "Let's ask someone who knows more," "Let's look it up together," or, "That's a great question to save for down the road."
3. It starts with you. The best way to teach kids faith skills is to practice them in our own lives. Modeling a daily pursuit of your relationship with God accomplishes way more than our words ever could.

Just remember—God has uniquely wired you to raise your kid. You can do this. Ask for help—from parents who are further along in their season of life and from God.

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Three in the Fire

Parent Connect (end)

Three in the Fire Crossword Puzzle

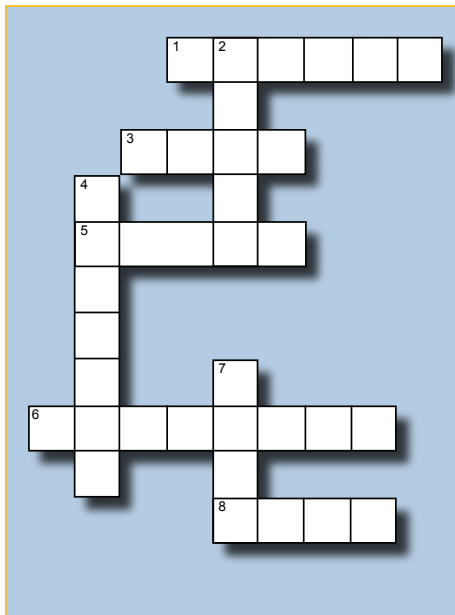


ACROSS

- 1. Another name for sculpture, carving or art figure
- 3. A match can start this.
- 5. Who was the fourth being in with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego?
- 6. Another name for army persons
- 8. Not silver but _____

DOWN

- 2. Number after two and before four
- 4. Country where the story takes place
- 7. Not a queen but a _____



Inspiration (end)

(from page 3)
 the familiar pattern of personality. He communicates with us through the avenues of our minds, our wills and our emotions. The continuous and unembarrassed interchange of love and thought between God and the soul of the redeemed man is the throbbing heart of New Testament religion. (Selected paragraphs, pp. 11-14)



Ministry of Intercession

With Christ in the School of Prayer, (Ch. 1, para. 1-5)

by Andrew Murray

‘And it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, that when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray.’—Luke 11:1

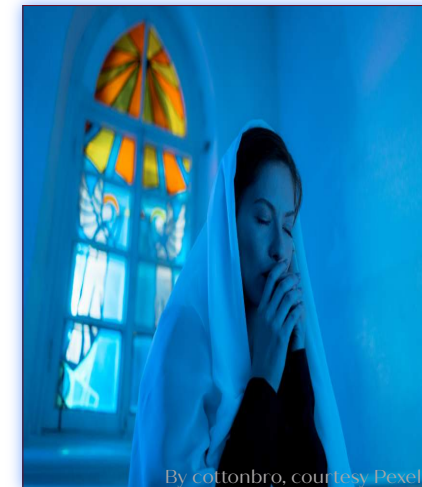
THE disciples had been with Christ, and seen Him pray. They had learnt to understand something of the connection between His wondrous life in public, and His secret life of prayer. They had learnt to believe in Him as a Master in the art of prayer—none could pray like Him. And so they came to Him with the request, ‘Lord, teach us to pray.’ And in after years they would have told us that there were few things more wonderful or blessed than He taught them than His lessons on prayer.

And now still it comes to pass, as He is praying in a certain place, that disciples who see Him thus engaged feel the need of repeating the same request, ‘Lord, teach us to pray.’ As we grow in the Christian life, the thought and the faith of the Beloved Master in His never-failing intercession becomes ever more precious, and the hope of being like Christ in His intercession gains an attractiveness before unknown. And as we see Him pray, and remember that there is none who can pray like Him, and none who can teach like Him, we feel the petition of the disciples, ‘Lord, teach us to pray,’ is just what we need. And as we think how all He is and has, how He Himself is our very own, how He is Himself our life, we feel assured that we have but to ask, and He will be delighted to take us up into closer fellowship with Himself, and teach us to pray even as He prays.

Come, my brothers! Shall we not go to the Blessed Master and ask Him to enroll our names anew in that school which He always keeps open for those who long to continue their studies in the Divine art of

prayer and intercession? Yes, let us this very day say to the Master, as they did of old, ‘Lord, teach us to pray.’ As we meditate, we shall find each word of the petition we bring to be full of meaning.

‘Lord, teach us to pray.’ Yes, to pray. This is what we need to be taught. Though in its beginnings prayer is so simple that the feeblest child can pray, yet it is at the same time the highest and holiest work to which man can rise. It is fellowship with the Unseen and Most Holy One. The powers of the eternal world have been placed at its disposal. It is the very essence of true religion, the channel of all blessings, the secret of power and life. Not only for ourselves, but for others,



for the Church, for the world, it is to prayer that God has given the right to take hold of Him and His strength. It is on prayer that the promises wait for their fulfillment, the kingdom for its coming, the glory of God for its full revelation. And for this blessed work, how slothful and unfit we are. It is only the Spirit of God can enable us to do it aright. How speedily we are deceived into a resting in the form, while the power is wanting. Our early training, the teaching of the Church, the influence of habit, the stirring of the emotions—how easily these lead to prayer which has no spiritual

power, and avails but little. True prayer, that takes hold of God’s strength, that availeth much, to which the gates of heaven are really opened wide—who would not cry, Oh for some one to teach me thus to pray?

Jesus has opened a school, in which He trains His redeemed ones, who specially desire it, to have power in prayer. Shall we not enter it with the petition, Lord! it is just this we need to be taught! O teach us to pray.





Bible Study

Fruit of the Spirit, Part 2

by Richard Dickens

The discussion of spiritual fruit can seem academic but we are discussing character development under fire. Trials, difficulties, hardship are what test our character—and successfully holding up by the power of the Spirit builds it.

You can't develop these strengths without adversity. It's easy being "sweet" and "friendly" at church, at work and home, most of the time. But when people make fun of you, lie about you, challenge you, plot to get you fired and make rumors fly, that's when you see what you are made of.

The last day tests are coming. Most of us want an easy day not a hard one. Fortunately, God knows how to temper life's burdens and challenges so we don't face severe stress everyday all day. Remember that Job had his day in the sun and then came the night. Believe me, the night is coming. Fortunately, we have this promise

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it. (1 Cor. 10:13, ESV).

Life is battle. Not always literally a pitched battle with guns and knives and physical conflict, though that is truly going on, and possible, if not probable, depending on where you live, where you commute. Some of us move in and out of "war zones" daily, be they literal or spiritual. James tells us that "the testing of your faith produces steadfastness." (James 1:3).

You don't get steadfastness by only dealing with a crying baby that won't stop, the incessant demands of rearing children, caring for ailing loved ones, coming to one mind with your spouse. You definitely get it from that and trusting God to provide daily bread and health—with or without healthcare. But if you are born again, you will face special trials beyond these. There's a reason Paul's life is outlined in the New Testament more than the others. Welcome to God's example of Christian warfare 101 for all time, especially the last days church.

Steadfastness (2 Pet. 1:6), in the Greek: υπομονη.

The closest to this in Paul's list is in Gal. 5:22, where Paul lists a different word which also translates as "patience." But Paul's word, μακροθυμια (makrothymia), carries the idea of forbearance (cf. Rom. 2:4; 9:22; Eph. 4:2; Col. 1:11; 3:12; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Tim 3:10; 4:2; Heb. 6:12). There are similarities between the two terms but there are subtle differences when used in the same sentence or paragraph (i.e., Col. 1:11; 2 Cor. 6:4, 6; 2 Tim. 3:10; also James 5:10ff.). However, different writers of the NT will translate υπομονη as patience (i.e., Lk. 8:15) and μακροθυμια as "complete patience" in 2 Tim. 4:2.

So, is there a difference? Yes, I see the variance in the Greek as patience nuanced under different circumstances. All could correctly be termed demonstrations of patience but under different circumstances one word is better used. The translators did their best to use our English words to bring out the experience implied in the original. For example, you and I might see a man being unjustly scolded by his boss and I might say, "he is a very patient man." You might reply, "he is long-suffering to put up with that." Both of us are right, but yours is probably the more appropriate response. Context determines the choice of words and how to translate the word or phrase.

Robertson notes that "Hupomonē is remaining under (hupomenō) difficulties without succumbing, while makrothymia is the long endurance that does not retaliate (Trench)."¹

Patience (trusting in Christ) is the bedrock of being steadfast under trial. Living by the Spirit grows the fruit. And He will give us the strength we need in our spiritual warfare. Patience grows into long-suffering as we wait for God to act in large and small trials, under intentional provocation or enduring the differences in personality in those we must interact with daily. Both will be developed in our character. That's why God brings different cultures, personality types together to demonstrate His power to change us into loving, patient people intent to realize Christ's prayer in John 17.

One author says this regarding steadfastness:

The mind devoted unreservedly to God, under the guidance of the divine Spirit, develops generally and



Bible Study (cont.)

harmoniously. The weak, vacillating character becomes changed through the power of God to one of strength and **steadfastness**. Continual devotion and piety establish so close a relation between Jesus and his disciple, that the Christian becomes like him in mind and character. After association with the Son of God, the humble follower of Christ is found to be a person of sound principle, clear perception, and reliable judgment. He has a connection with God, the source of light and understanding. He who longed to be of service to the cause of Christ, has been so quickened by the life-giving rays of the Sun of Righteousness, that he has been enabled to bear much fruit to the glory of God.²

Rev. 14:12 states, "Here is a call for the **patience** of the saints, those who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus." The last day people will need endurance that comes from exercising patience in the Spirit on a daily basis. Exercising patience through the Spirit brings about a Godly nature.

Godliness, εὐσέβειαν (2 Pet. 1:3, 6-7; 3:11)³

When you see the word godliness, what do you think of—god-likeness, characteristics that are like God? If so, then you are thinking of what fallen man is not. Someone will counter, "Though fallen, yet made in His image." True—and because fallen it takes divine power to become godly—a radical transformation of every man. Read 2 Peter 1:3, His divine power is necessary to make it happen both for life and for godliness.

In order to be godly, we have to know what God is like. Thus, we have to meet Him. Reading about Him is not sufficient. We have to experience Him. That is the starting point. It is the corrective to our fallen perspective of what and who God is as well as who we are and what our fellow man is or is not.

What "new" element corrects our vision? I would say that it is primarily reverence—an appropriate awareness of God's presence that evokes awe, deep respect and the revelation of the stark contrast of God to what we are, even in our best dress blues. It is the appropriate response in life when creature meets Creator. That encounter changes the man, woman, child and how they live—or should.

The word Peter uses carries the idea of distance, reserve, "to step back [from someone or something], maintain a distance" (cf. σοβέω, "to keep away, drive away").

It is further thought that, as contexts often gave the reason for maintaining a distance, there developed from this spatial

meaning the metaphorical idea of trepidation ranging from shame, through wonder, to something approaching fear. This etymology is not accepted by all (cf. Frisk 2:686–87). In any case, the verb does express an attitude of fear, which may be evoked by that which is sublime and majestic or by the risk of failure.⁴

Consider these two biblical examples. First, Job's response when God confronts him,

I had heard of you by the hearing of the ear, but now my eye sees you; therefore I despise myself, and repent in dust and ashes." (Job 42:5, 6, ESV).

I am also reminded of Isaiah meeting God:

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!"

And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!" (Is. 6:1-5, ESV).

I am sure you remember Moses and the burning bush experience and other examples. My point is that somewhere in our experience, we need that creature to Creator encounter that gives us proper perspective to God, ourselves and our fellow man. Awe best comes from meeting God. Then the word Almighty begins to have appropriate meaning.

The disciples lacked that sense when they first met Jesus. When Jesus began performing miracles and caused the wind and sea to cease, they marveled. They knew they were in the presence of something more than mere man. They may still have viewed Him as a prophet, Messiah, but their experience of Christ was in transformation.

Sin has greatly distorted our proper response to the Person of God. Worship today mostly, in my opinion, both personal and corporate, clouds a proper understanding of what it means to approach God in adoration, praise even contrition. The Spirit was given to those who love Him, to lead us to know Him as intimately as possible—but our experience of intimacy with God is radically different. We know ourselves to be sinners and creatures both. We (to page 11)

Anniversaries & Birthdays

Anniversaries

Jeff & Lisa Marcell	7/2
Mekuanint Kelifa & Wubnesh Terefe	7/2
Greg & Stephanie Mazza	7/7
Brent & Amy Cordis	7/29

Birthdays

Nadean Faulkner	7/1	Jimmy Majors	7/13
Myron Moragia	7/1	Sabrina Thomas	7/14
Karl Bohnert	7/2	Brent Cordis	7/19
Nate Hatcher, Sr.	7/2	Jean Wood	7/21
Shannon Hardy	7/5	Ann Foster	7/23
Adama Rashid	7/5	Adrian Johnson Jr.	7/28
Derek Riethmeier	7/5	Kofi Amponsah	7/29
Mikayla Burns	7/9	Thomas Hardy	7/29
Lillian Burns	7/9	Jacinth Walters	7/29
Danett Guy	7/9	John Caesar	7/30
Jennifer Collier	7/11	Donald Middlebrooks	7/30
Antonio Johnson	7/13		

By Mel Poole, courtesy Unsplash

her tears and wiping them with her hair, our calling to repentance and expression of love at Christ's forgiveness. Simon did not see Jesus for Who He was, nor did he see himself correctly, much less Mary. Mary's example should have brought him to shame but his pride would not allow him yet. (Lk. 7:36-50).

I quote again Isaiah who, upon seeing God in vision cried out, "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" (Isa. 6:5, E.S.V.). These encounters, which are meant to be daily, will produce humility, meekness, modesty under the Spirit's guidance. That will transform our experiences with our family and fellow man.

When Peter writes God has given us "all things that pertain to life and godliness" he states it is "through the knowledge of Him that has called us." (2 Pt. 1:3). That knowledge comes from experiential daily encounters with Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And daily worship at the feet of Jesus transforms corporate worship. Worship is not to be a mixed multitude experience. Where the majority of God's people come in the Spirit of Isaiah, there is true worship.

If our daily experience is not one of reverence that humbles and subdues us then something is wrong. Either we are too distracted to truly meet Him or we know what He wants and we are avoiding that encounter as Adam and Eve avoided God in the garden.

A revival of true godliness among us is the greatest and most urgent of all our needs. To seek this should be our first work. There must be earnest effort to obtain the blessing of the Lord, not because God is not willing to bestow his blessing upon us, but because we are unprepared to receive it. Our Heavenly Father is more willing to give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him, than are earthly parents to give good gifts to their children. But it is our work, by confession, humiliation, repentance, and earnest prayer, to fulfill the conditions upon which God has promised to grant us his blessing. A revival need be expected only in answer to prayer. While the people are so destitute of God's Holy Spirit, they cannot appreciate the preaching of the word; but when the Spirit's power touches their hearts, then the discourses given will not be without effect. Guided by the teachings of God's word, with the manifestation of his Spirit, in the exercise of sound discretion, those who attend our meetings will gain a precious experience, and returning home will be prepared to exert a healthful influence.⁵

Bible Study End Notes

¹Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament, Vol. 4, Commentary on Colossians 1:11, Dr. A. T. Robertson.

²Christian Education, p. 199.2, Ellen White.

³Though not in Paul's list in Gal. 5, his references are: 1 Tim. 2:10; 3:16; 4:7-8; 5:4; 6:3, 5-6, 11; 2 Tim. 3:5; Tit. 1:1.

⁴NIDNTTE, Vol. 4, p. 272. See also article on the verb sebomai (σεβομαι).

⁵Review and Herald, March 22, 1887, para. 1, Ellen White.

Bible Study (end)

(from page 10)

know Him to be sinless and Creator. We know both fear and love, attraction and repulsion.

Thus, that paradoxical experience of guilt, shame, mingled with the knowledge of forgiveness. The sharp and strong awareness of creatureliness when in the presence of our Creator is the path to restoration to normality. For me, it is the cornerstone of good mental health.

His Being evokes what is within us, what we have distorted or hidden. And, for those of us who have accepted Him as Father Creator, Christ as Savior, the Spirit as Re-creator, acceptance as made in His image and it inspires the desire to be remade in His image. The Creator has a bond with whom He made.

There is also a repulsion at what we have made in our arrogance and pride. God sees it and when we meet Him, we see it too and we are ashamed. We may not see it in its fullness yet, but that is the work of the Spirit to reveal it to us. We see in Mary, who knew herself to be a sinner but responded to the compelling calling of the Spirit to kneel at Christ's feet, wetting them with