

The Sword AND Staff

“Preach the Word” (II Timothy 4:2) • “Feed the Flock” (I Peter 5:2)

The Epistle of 2nd Peter:

Not “**FOREWARNED** and **FOREARMED**,” But Rather “**FOREARMED** and **FOREWARNED**”



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IN THIS ARTICLE we would like to make a brief study of the epistle of 2 Peter. There is a saying that to be forewarned is to be forearmed. However, in 2 Peter this order seems to be reversed. The forearming comes before the forewarning. It is not until we come to the second chapter that we are warned. False teachers, whose lives were likewise false, were going to invade the church. But the forearming has already taken place in the 1st chapter. By knowing God and the Word of God, as Peter admonishes them, they would be ready to confront false teachers and false teaching. A person in a right relationship with God is not going to find something else more inviting. Then in the third chapter, the last two verses, the apostle ends this epistle with an admonition that further includes these aspects of forewarning and forearming (and in that order). “Ye therefore, beloved, [1] seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. [2] But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever.

Amen” (2 Peter 3:17-18). These words of exhortation sum up what this epistle is all about, and they are good to remember as key verses to the epistle.

Now let us take a more-in-detail look at what Peter has to say here, following the sequence of his epistle. First we deal with becoming forearmed, then the warning.

I. FOREARMED

This epistle starts off with a wonderful salutation and then continues with admonitions about adding to their faith and growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.

“Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance [self-control]; and to temperance [self-control] patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity [love]. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Wherefore I will not be negligent to put you always in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be established in the present truth.” (2 Peter 1:2-12)

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—THANK YOU—

Proverbially **SPEAKING...**

YOUR future is bright if you are walking in the light.

Life by the yard is hard, but by the foot and the inch it becomes a cinch (so, live one day at a time, Matthew 6:34).

There is no one so blind as the person who will not see.

The purpose of the Law is accomplished when we are condemned and convicted of our sins, and under conviction we come to God through Christ for mercy and grace.

Interesting people are people who are interested (interested in things, people, happenings, etc.).

For a life that has been well-lived, dying is like saying "amen" at the end of a beautiful prayer.

A generous and liberal person finds that he is treated accordingly.

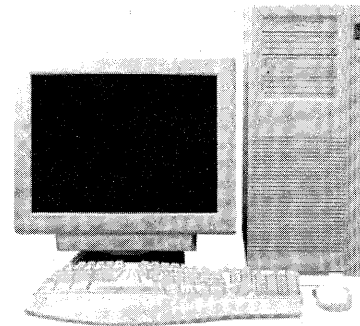
A heart warmed by the gospel of Christ will never be cold and indifferent toward others.

Be kind for kindness begets kindness (each kind after its kind).

By having second thoughts, many times we can be saved from the folly of the first ones.

Carrying a grudge is a heavy load.

EDITORIAL COMMENTS



A CONSIDERATION OF MAN'S RESPONSE AND COMMITMENT TO GOD

MANY TIMES there is a great gulf between the quality of our response and commitment to the Lord when looked at from that which is enjoined in the Scriptures. We are made to wonder what some professing believers really believe about God. Really, how do we acceptably respond to a Being that is called the "Almighty God" (Genesis 17:1) and the One in whom "we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28)? Obviously, it must be with our *all*. Otherwise it would appear that we are "worshipping" a much lesser deity than the One we read about in the Bible. And do we even grasp and understand, as well as esteem and fully appreciate, the inclusiveness and the exclusiveness of Christianity (and what God has done for fallen humanity, spanning time and eternity)? Do we really realize what a great salvation we have, and are we responding accordingly?

A very simple, but most profound statement, is made by Moses in Deuteronomy 6:4-5. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with *ALL* *thine heart*, and with *ALL* *thy soul*, and with *ALL* *thy might*."

Do we get the impact of what is being said here? God is one. It is not a multiplicity of deities being worshipped. That being the case, our devotion to this one God must be one, singular. Consequently, he is to receive our undivided allegiance, love and devotion. We are to love him with all of our hearts, with all of our souls, and with all of our might. This can hardly be surpassed as a well-worded statement in what is expected of man in his response and relationship to God.

In the New Testament Scriptures, looking back to the Law (and even to this one), a certain lawyer approached Jesus with a question that was correspondingly profound. "Master, which is the great commandment in the law?" Without hesitation, the Lord answered, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *ALL* *thy heart*, and with *ALL* *thy soul*, and with *ALL* *thy mind* [might]. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbour *as thyself*. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matthew 22:36-40). What great and wonderful truths!

In the Sermon on the Mount, with his focus now upon the coming kingdom and the New Testament, the Lord Jesus said, "But *seek ye FIRST the kingdom of God*, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33). In the 13th chapter of Matthew, Jesus "likens" the kingdom

of heaven to many things in parables. Outstanding among these are two short ones, Matthew 13:44-46. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth **ALL that he hath**, and buyeth that field. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold **ALL that he had**, and bought it." And in this vein of thought, read Luke 14:26-33. Jesus concludes what he has to say here with these words, "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not **ALL that he hath**, he cannot be my disciple."

Time and time again throughout the New Testament epistles we read words like the following. "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or **WHATSOEVER** ye do, **do ALL to the glory of God**" (1 Corinthians 10:31). "And **WHATSOEVER** ye do in word or deed, **do ALL in the name of the Lord Jesus**, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17). And then such admonitions like this: "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from **ALL filthiness of the flesh and spirit**, perfecting holinesses in the fear of God" (2 Corinthians 7:1). "Casting down imaginations, and **EVERY high thing** that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity **EVERY thought to the obedience of Christ**" (2 Corinthians 10:5). "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside **EVERY weight, and the sin** which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1).

There are many, many Scriptures that repeatedly emphasize the theme of this little article, but let us close out with this section in 2 Peter, chapter one. Here the apostle Peter writes, "Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us **ALL things that pertain unto life and godliness**, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving **ALL diligence**, add to your faith..." (1:2-5a). Notice. In our salvation, the Lord has given unto us "**ALL things** that pertain unto life and godliness." We are fully equipped to live the Christian life. But we must tap onto these resources and take advantage of our favored situa-

tion. In doing this, he states that we need to be "**giving ALL diligence**" to take these steps to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. He specifically lays it all out before us here.

This word translated "**diligence**" in "**ALL diligence**" finds its way into the English language in the word "speed." The basic Greek word, as used in 2 Peter 1:5a, is *spoudé*. Here it means haste, earnestness, diligence (as translated). Our English word "speed," derived from the Greek, is very much akin to this word in meaning. In responding to this "so great salvation" (Hebrews 2:3) that is ours, wherein are given us "all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (accompanying our "exceeding great and precious promises"), we should be thereby genuinely motivated and move on out with "speed" in carrying out what the Lord wants us to do. Remember Hebrews 11:6. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is [the **ALMIGHTY God**], and that he is a rewarder of them that **DILIGENTLY seek him**."

Yes, any way that we look at it, our relationship to God is not a matter of indifference. We were made by God and for God. True religion is not just something that is to be added to our lives; it is life itself. It is to be evidenced in every activity and finger of life. Christ must be Lord of all in our lives or he is not Lord at all in our lives. We are not flawless, but it does mean that we have unreservedly committed ourselves to the great God of eternity who is flawless. Then through His grace and mercy we wholeheartedly respond and are committed to Him. □

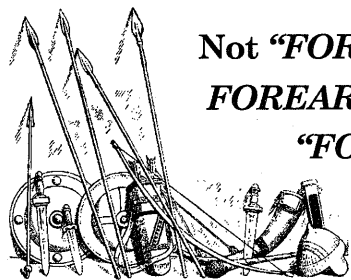
(Certain words in this article are put in bold italic print and bold capital letters to highlight the truth).



They Refused to Believe

PEOPLE refuse to believe that which they don't want to believe, in spite of the evidence. When explorers first went to Australia, they found a mammal which laid eggs; spent some time in water, some on land; had a broad, flat tail, webbed feet, and a bill similar to a duck. This was the platypus. Upon their return to England, they told the populace of this, and everyone felt that it was a hoax. After returning to Australia, they got a pelt from this animal and took it back to England. But the people still felt it was a hoax. In spite of the evidence, they disbelieved because they didn't want to believe. Some people are this way about the Bible and certain doctrines of the Bible. Are we reluctant to believe simply because we don't want to believe?—**Selected** □





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Full Knowledge

Yes, “Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the **knowledge** of God, and of Jesus our Lord.” This word “knowledge” is repeatedly found in this section of Scripture and throughout this epistle (1:2,3,5,6,8; 2:20; 3:18). In four of these references (1:2,3,8; 2:20), the intensified form of the word is used in the original language, with the **epi** prefix in front of it (**epi-gnosis**), implying full knowledge. This makes the salutation even more meaningful where actually he is saying that “grace and peace” would be “multiplied” (given in abundance) through the *full knowledge* of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. And “all things that pertain unto life and godliness” have been given to us through this *full knowledge*. We are right with God and are spiritually equipped to live the Christian life. The person who really knows God and the Word of God is not a candidate for apostasy. He knows the truth and is living it. The grass does not look greener on the other side of the fence.

Growing in Grace and Knowledge

Growing in grace and knowledge, as the apostle lays it out before us here, is the key to being forearmed. In being realized, it is an ongoing process. Starting out with **faith**, the basic ingredient in becoming and remaining a Christian, seven other crucial components are to be added in sequence, logically following one another. (Notice: When we are adding, God multiplies [verse 2]. That is the kind of God we serve.)

- Peter says, “Giving all diligence, add to your faith **virtue**.” This word rendered “virtue” means moral excellence and courage, manliness, valor. Coupled with faith (and diligence) this puts resolve and backbone into our taking heed to what is said here.
- “And to virtue **knowledge**”—this is what follows virtue. We may have faith, and we may have moral courage (virtue) in taking a stand for Christ, but “knowledge” is needed to channel our sincere efforts in the right direction. Otherwise our religious energies may be futilely expended.

- “And to knowledge **temperance**”—“self-control” being the more exact and current translation. Along with knowledge, self-control is a must if we are to consolidate and move on in our spiritual development (and thus be forearmed).
- “And to temperance **patience**”—this word in the original language, literally means to stay under. It is variously translated “perseverance,” “steadfastness,” and “endurance.” Meshed with self-control, this fittingly falls in line with all of the other elements that we are instructed to add one to the other. Much patience is needed in being a Christian.
- “And to patience **godliness**”—meaning devout and devoted to God. Godliness is a combination of a deep reverence for God that is manifested in a restrained and pious life.
- “And to godliness **brotherly kindness**”—interestingly, the word in the original language is *philadelphia*. While we are growing in the grace and knowledge of God and the Lord Jesus Christ, not only is this evident in our godly demeanor, it is likewise evident in our human relationships.
- “And to brotherly kindness charity [**love**]”—having started out with faith and now ending in love, these are the crucial components that hold it all together. In harmony with what he says here, the apostle Peter elsewhere said that “above all things have fervent love” (1 Peter 4:8). And the apostle Paul wrote, “Now the end [goal] of the commandment is charity [love] out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned” (1 Timothy 1:5).

The End Result and Results

Yes, and thus what will be the end result and results of all of this (the outcome of adding all of these things to our lives)? *The result*: “For if these things be in you and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the **knowledge** [full knowledge] of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1:8). *Results*: And as he further instructs them, and we see the continuing results, he says, “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: **for it ye do these things, ye shall never fall**” (1:10). And finally the great climaxing result: “For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (1:11).

Parallel Thoughts from Paul

To underscore the great truths of what the apostle Peter has said, perhaps some words from

the apostle Paul would likewise be in order. He, too, dealt with the problem of apostasy, forewarning and forearming Christians to be prepared to handle the situation. After warning the Ephesian elders about false teachers and falling away (Acts 20:29-32), in more of a composite statement Paul says to them, "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified" (20:32). Now read Colossians 2:1-10. Confronting philosophy and traditions of men, Paul wanted these Christians to be "rooted and built up in him [Christ], and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving...For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, And ye are complete in him..." (2:7,9). And in verse 3 he said, "In whom [Christ] are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." That being the case, what would be appealing about a false doctrine anyway? The grass is not greener on the other side of the fence.

The Best Defense

If our spiritual life is in good shape, we are not a candidate for apostasy. We know God and the Word of God. If we are a spiritual fortress and consequently fortified, we will not have to frantically search for arms when danger arises. It is easier for people who are "prayed up" to stand up and face up to these undesirable situations. The old saying goes that an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure. True. But even better still, a good offense is the best defense.



II. FOREWARNED

Now let us notice the forewarning. We find it in the second chapter of 2 Peter and it goes on into the last chapter. The apostle Peter foretells the coming of false teachers. Looking back to Old Testament times, and applying it to the present situation, he says "there were false prophets also among the people, even as ***there shall be false teachers among you***, who privily [secretly] shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction" (2:1). The apostle, even before he tells us more about these ungodly false teachers, is quick to say that God's judgment will come upon them,

citing past illustrations of such judgment (2:4-6). Peter's prophetic foreknowledge is so vivid that when he writes about these false teachers, it is almost like it is in the present tense (2:10-22). But we don't actually find fulfillment of this until we come to the epistle of Jude, which plainly reflects knowledge of 2 Peter and the very words that we read in this chapter.

False Lives, False Doctrine

As we said before, not only was the doctrine of these particular teachers false, their lives were likewise false. False teaching opens the door for false living, and false living can make us more susceptible to false teaching. They would need a very radical departure from sound doctrine to deaden their consciences so that it would not bother them while pursuing the lifestyle that they would be advocating and living.

"Turning the Grace of God into Lasciviousness"

It is really hard to define the doctrine of these false teachers, except that it is just the opposite of godliness (as evident in their lives). They were libertines, including sexual immorality (2:14). Perhaps they were putting grace up as a front (using it as a license to justify their unrestrained living). Peter wrote, "While ***they promise them liberty***, they themselves are the servants of corruption..." (2:19). Jude, in speaking of the fulfillment of 2 Peter 2:19 and other Scriptures, says, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained [written about before] to this condemnation, ungodly men, ***turning the grace of God into lasciviousness***, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude, verse 4).

They "Despise Government"

Looking back to the reference in 2 Peter 2:1, notice that when Peter foretold and warned them of these coming false teachers, he said they would be "denying the ***Lord [Despotes]*** that bought them..." Above when Jude said they were "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness," he continued, saying, "And denying the only ***Lord [Despotes]*** God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." The word for Lord (***despotes***) in the original language is the stronger word for Lord. It signifies supreme authority. (Although the word has come to have a negative connotation, we can still see the force of its meaning in our Anglicized word "despot"). So, it would seem that Peter and Jude are intentionally using this word. Understandably, these false teachers were having problems with the concept of

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The "Let Us" Admonitions in the Hebrews Epistle

Introduction:



1. The book of Hebrews seems to have been written to show the superiority of Christ over the Old Testament religion.
 - (1) The writer shows that Christ is superior to the angels (through whom the Law was given).
 - (2) He shows that Christ is superior to Moses.
 - (3) He shows that Christ is superior to Joshua.
 - (4) He shows that the priesthood of Christ is superior to the Levitical.
 - (5) He shows the blood and sacrifice of Christ is superior to the animal sacrifice.
2. The writer admonishes by way of practical application.
 - (1) He lays out a doctrine then jointly applies it to their situation and himself as he goes along, by saying "let us."
 - (2) There are others applications and admonitions not using the "let us" approach (2:1-4, etc.), but these are interesting to notice.
 - (3) Chapter 10 (2nd part) through the 13th chapter of Hebrews is continuous application.

I. "LET US" ADMONITIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE FAILURE OF MOSES AND JOSHUA TO GIVE THE ISRAELITES REST IN THE PROMISED LAND

- "**Let us** therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it" (Hebrews 4:1).
- "**Let us** labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief" (Hebrews 4:11).

II. "LET US" ADMONITIONS IN CONNECTION WITH THE DISCOURSE ON THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST

- "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, **let us** hold fast our profession" (Hebrews 4:14).
- "**Let us** therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).
- "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, **let us** go on unto perfection: not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God" (Hebrews 6:1).

III. "LET US" ADMONITIONS IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE MAIN ARGUMENTS ON THE SUPERIORITY OF CHRIST OVER THE OLD TESTAMENT RELIGION

- "**Let us** draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water" (Hebrews 10:22).
- "**Let us** hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)" (Hebrews 10:23).
- "And **let us** consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Hebrews 10:24-25).

IV. "LET US" ADMONITIONS FOLLOWING THE LISTING OF THE HEROES OF FAITH IN THE 11TH CHAPTER

- "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, **let us** lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and **let us** run with patience the race that is set before us" (Hebrews 12:1).

V. THE REMAINING "LET US" ADMONITION IN HEBREWS

- "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, **let us** have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:28-29).
- "**Let us** go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach" (Hebrews 13:13).
- "By him therefore **let us** offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name" (Hebrews 13:15).

Three other admonition references in Hebrews have the word "let" in them (12:13; 13:1; 13:5), but not "let us," which are outstanding. Chapter 13:1 reads, "**Let** brotherly love continue." And 13:5 says, "**Let** your conversation [the way that you live] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

The book of Hebrews is a great book to spend more time with in study. There are many other admonitions to consider. □



What is love?

It is silence—when your words would hurt.
 It is patience—when your neighbor's curt.
 It is deafness—when a scandal flows.
 It is thoughtfulness—for other's woes.
 It is promptness—when stern duty calls.
 It is courage—when misfortune falls.



Poor Guideposts



Not “FOREWARNED and FOREARMED,” But Rather “FOREARMED and FOREWARNED”

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a sovereign God and consequently authority; therefore, they denied Him (and they mocked the second coming of Christ and judgment, 3:3-10). To believe these things would cramp their lifestyle (that of unstrained, licentious living). Not only that, Peter said they would “despise government”; they would be “self-willed...not afraid to speak evil of dignities” (2:10). Also, Jude said, “Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities” (Jude, verse 8). They did not want a sovereign God to stand in the way of their licentiousness and they despised any representation of authority, human or otherwise, that would restrain them in any way.

They “Make Merchandise of You”

These false teachers were mercenary in their intentions. They were out to use and make merchandise of the people. Instead of feeding the sheep, they wanted to fleece them. Peter warns that “through covetousness shall they with feigned [deceptive] words make merchandise of you...” (2:3). He further talks about their “covetous practices” (2:14). They are put in a category with the false prophet Balaam in the Old Testament. Of these coming false teachers, Peter writes, “Which

have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness” (2:15).

The Worst Thing

In becoming Christians Peter’s readers had “escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (1:4). There was this danger, however, especially among newer converts (2:18,19) to fall back into their old pagan ways of moral abandonment and dissipated living under the guise of grace like the false teachers were doing. With that in mind, Peter asserts, “For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the *knowledge* [*epi-gnosis*, full knowledge] of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.” He is talking about this happening to people who unquestionably were Christians. (Note *epi-gnosis*, the word for full knowledge). It can and does happen. The flesh is weak. How appropriate is this letter!

CONCLUSION

Yes, to be forewarned is to be forearmed. As we have noticed, Peter has reversed this order in what he writes in 2 Peter. Now since we have examined the warning under “FOREWARNED,” perhaps it would be good to go back and read the first part of this article, “FOREARMED,” again (and the whole epistle of 2 Peter). We can better understand and appreciate the things Peter has to say here. And we can better see how the closing admonition in 2 Peter 3:17 and 18 fittingly brings this epistle to a conclusion.

“Ye therefore, beloved, [1] seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. [2] But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen” (2 Peter 3:17-18).

Let us apply what we have learned from 2 Peter to the situations in which we find ourselves in today’s world. It is always good to be forearmed. And there is much false teaching (and false living) out there. Let us always be growing in the grace and knowledge of the Lord. Amen. □

— — — — —
*The stand that some people take
 religiously is so meaningless they
 might as well sit down.*
 — — — — —

Hope

HOPE is usually described with such visual metaphors as a ray, a beam, a glimmer of hope; the break in the clouds; the light at the end of a dark tunnel. It is often discovered in unexpected places and in unexpected ways.

Life is full of a series of challenges that we must face. Although these challenges may seem impossible at times, they are probably there for a reason. The storm makes the tree strong. Or, in another figure, it is the sandpaper that makes the wood smooth. We need to help our children learn the value of hope very early and in all they do. It sustains and gives reason to the most difficult tasks.

No matter what sort of adversity or challenge we face, we can always believe that, with hope, it can be conquered and, in the end, we will be stronger for having faced it. Life goes on regardless of circumstances. Despair is not only the opposite of hope, it is the enemy of hope. Eliminate that.—*The Light* □

Isaac Newton's Friend (An Example of Selflessness)

EVERY young student knows of Isaac Newton's famed encounter with a falling apple. Newton discovered and introduced the laws of gravity in the 1600s, which revolutionized astronomical studies. But few know that if it weren't for Edmund Halley, the world might never have learned from Newton. It was Halley who challenged Newton to think through his original notions. Halley corrected Newton's mathematical errors and prepared geometrical figures to support his discoveries. Halley coaxed the hesitant Newton to write his great work, *Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*. Halley edited and supervised the publication, and actually financed its printing even though Newton was wealthier and easily could have afforded the printing costs.

Historians call it one of the most selfless examples in the annals of science. Newton began almost immediately to reap the rewards of prominence; Halley received little credit. He did use the principles to predict the orbit and return of the comet that would later bear his name, but only AFTER his death did he receive any acclaim. And because the comet only returns every seventy-six years, the notice is rather infrequent. Halley remained a devoted scientist who didn't care who received the credit as long as the cause was being advanced.

Others have played Halley's role. John the Baptist said of Jesus, "He must become greater; I must become less." Barnabas was content to intro-

duce others to greatness. Many pray to uphold the work of one Christian leader. Such selflessness advances the kingdom.—*Selected* □

"They that know God will be humble, and they that know themselves cannot be proud."

BIBLE QUESTIONS

(Random Questions Over the Bible)

1. In the time of Noah, when the whole world was destroyed by the flood, how many people were saved on the ark?
2. In the judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah were other cities destroyed (and if so, name them)?
3. Mount Horeb was another name for what place or region?
4. When Moses came down from the mountain with the Ten Commandments, what was unusual about his appearance as the children of Israel looked upon him?
5. Where did Aaron, the brother of Moses, die on the way to the Promised Land?
6. What finally happened to the false prophet Balaam who was hired by the king of Moab to curse the Israelites?
7. What unusual means did God use in helping the Israelites drive the Canaanite tribes out of the Promised Land?
8. Besides illicit sex and homosexual perversion, what other sins were Sodom and Gomorrah given over to?
9. When Jonah was swallowed by the big fish, how long was he in its belly?
10. List other information found in the New Testament Scriptures of things that happened in the Old Testament (pre-christian times) that is not recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures?
11. What are two occasions when Jesus spoke mild words of "rebuke" to his mother?
12. What were the names of the half-brothers of Jesus?
13. How extensively did the scribes and Pharisees tithe of their possessions?
14. Which epistles in the New Testament were written by Paul when he was a prisoner?
15. What were the distinctive differences in the beliefs of the Pharisees and the Sadducees?
16. About 1/5th of the book of Acts is made up of speeches. (1) True; (2) False
17. After Paul's conversion in Damascus, where did he spend three years before going back to Jerusalem?
18. In the Roman army, a "chief captain" (KJV) (*chiliarchos*) was an officer over how many soldiers (and a "centurion" was over how many)?
19. Where are three epistles mentioned in the New Testament written by apostles that did not become a part of the New Testament Scriptures?
20. Who in the New Testament are said to be poor, yet making many rich, and having nothing, yet possessing all things?

(NOTE: Answers found elsewhere in this issue of the paper)

READERS'

...Response

APOLOGY: Please accept our humble apology for slowness in getting correspondence answered. "We" have no staff of secretaries, etc. to handle such, and this is done by the "editor" as time allows. Be it known that you are sincerely appreciated. □

GEORGIA:

■ *"Thank you for all you do."*

NORTH CAROLINA:

■ *"Please send us the bound volumes marked. Can we reprint some articles for the local newspapers? [Yes—Editor]"*

"We appreciate the good work you are doing in encouraging Christians and teaching the Word..."

■ *"I have been getting THE SWORD AND STAFF for a number of years and really appreciate the work you put into it. I would like to have all the bound volumes that are available and copies of all the tracts to use in my outreach ministry..."*

"May God continue to bless your faithful efforts in His service." (E-Mail)

TENNESSEE:

■ *"God bless you and keep up those beautiful works."*

■ *"I remember my grandmother reading to me from your paper many, many years ago. I thank God for your hard work..."*

"I am doing the leg work for a couple who desire to receive your paper; their address follows."

"I know your paper will be a great blessing to them as it has been to me for so many years. I have all of your bound volumes and they have been so much help in sermon prep."

"I believe the church would do well to use your paper in place of the liberal literature it uses today to properly teach God's Word. That's why I mention THE SWORD AND STAFF in revivals and speaking engagements...to let people know that there are others

with the backbone to teach and preach the entire Word of God.

"May God continue to bless you and your work."

VIRGINIA:

■ *"Brother, this paper is the best. When I get it, I sit and read through it at once. I believe just like it states. May God bless you and keep them coming."*

■ *"I am wanting all 9 bound volumes of THE SWORD AND STAFF! Plus the POEMS OF THE SOUL AND PROVERBS, 1989-1990, 1991-1992, 1993-1994, 1995-1996, 1997-1998, 1999-2000, 2001-2002, 2003-2004, 2005-2006! Please! My preacher made me aware of these books and I've read the small booklets he has. They are great! My funding is limited at this time, but I will send some money in a while. I am incarcerated at...jail, and the books would really help me and others, greatly!...Please help me to keep reading material that is so good and uplifting! Our God knows I need it!! In Christian love!"*

PENNSYLVANIA:

■ *"Thank you for continuing to publish THE SWORD AND STAFF. Please find our donation enclosed and continue to keep us on your mailing list."*

■ *"Greetings in the name of our blessed Savior, King Jesus. Daily I do pray for you and your well-being spiritually, mentally and physically. Your work for the Lord and the kingdom is most important; the teachings and conservative messages are an inspiration and help to both Christians and sinners alike. THE SWORD AND STAFF is many times the icing on the cake...Thank you..."*

MARYLAND:

■ *"I really enjoy reading your magazine...God bless and keep putting out good sound Biblical articles."*

NEW YORK:

■ *"Greetings in His precious name. I do remember you in my prayers that God will bless your labor for Him."*

"Someone gave me a copy of your publication. It is old and I do not know if you still publish. Please send me information if you still are working in that area"

"Thank you for your assistance."

OHIO:

■ *"I ran across an issue of THE SWORD AND STAFF dating back to 1995. Hopefully, someone could inform me how to receive a subscription to this great spiritual magazine. It would be an extremely great addition to my Bible study, prayer life, and overall Biblical knowledge."*

ILLINOIS:

■ *"I just read where you were almost out of NOBODY LEFT BEHIND. Will you please send me one book? Thank you and God bless you."*

(Continued on Next Page)

READERS'...Response

(Continued from Previous Page)

■ "Please send the bound volumes of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* going back 18 years (9 books). Also, *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND*. Also would like one each of tracts listed on the back page..."

■ "Please send another copy of *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND* for my Sunday School teacher's library. (I don't want to give mine away) I would also very much appreciate the bound volumes of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*..."

"Thank you for your great ministry of His Word through your publications!"

IOWA:

■ "I would like one set [of the bound volumes of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*] for our church library and one set for my personal use. Keep up the good work. It is tremendous."

■ "Here is some money...Please use it (as I know you will) in the way you think best to help some others to stand for the truth and not be led astray by our fads which are not new but only recycled from the devil's bag of deceptions."

"With sincere best wishes and kindest regards."

■ "Enclosed is some postage money for the last bound volume(s) you sent me. Thanks for sending. I consider these very valuable to maintain the faith of our group after I am gone. I encourage anyone I can to purchase a set for the future of their group. I understand you will send what you have for the cost of the postage..."

MISSOURI:

■ "I am enjoying the bound volumes. I really enjoy the questions. Thank you so much and may the good Lord bless and keep you. Thank you."

■ "I would like to order the bound volumes of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I spoke with you on the phone today. I'm very impressed with *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. Enclosed is my contribution..."

■ "I have just read your volume 46, # 2 publication. It was the first opportunity I have had to read *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I enjoyed it very much, and would like to be put on your mailing list. I would also like to receive any past bound volumes you might be able to forward to me..."

■ "Enclosed please find a check...Please send bound volumes of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*...Please use the remainder of the money to help with production costs of *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. And may our Dear Lord Continue to bless you and to use the publication for His glory and to advance His Kingdom. Thank you."

MISSISSIPPI:

■ "I have thoroughly enjoyed *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. I am enclosing \$___ for postage, etc. etc. Please

send all the copies [bound volumes] from the past. May God bless you and yours. Keep up the good work."

TEXAS:

■ "I have received your religious paper for many years and I look forward to each issue..."

■ "We appreciate your publication very much. The articles stay with their subject real good..."

■ "...Send me 2 more *NOBODY LEFT BEHIND* if you still have them. I'll mail you a check."

MONTANA:

■ "We continue to appreciate your firm stand for the truth."

GUATEMALA:

■ "Today I saw some magazines in Spanish that you printed *LA ESPADA Y EL CAYADO*. I would like to receive those studies and the book of poems and proverbs that you wrote..."

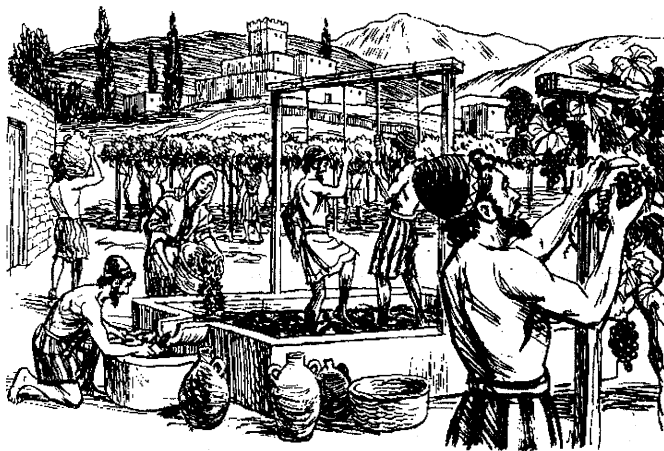
PHILIPPINES:

■ "Greetings to you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Praise God for your efforts of publishing *THE SWORD AND STAFF*. The direct expositions and applications of the Scriptures and the doctrinal presentations in every issue of *THE SWORD AND STAFF* are very timely nowadays, that there are so called 'believers' who are lenient in their position in interpreting the Scriptures and are going along with denominationalism. Keep up the good work..." □

"Sorry...Let Us Know Again"

THIS is an apology to several people who requested that their names be removed from the mailing list of *The Sword and Staff*. We are sorry, but you will have to let us know again. Our mailing list as recorded in our computer, when modified or changed, is normally backed up externally. Something like a dozen or so people, requesting removal from the mailing list, had not been backed up. And, as Job said, "For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me..." (Job 3:25). Lightning devastated a giant oak tree in the front yard and came on into the house to work havoc (including havoc on our computer). We are thankful that we were not in the building! And we are thankful that the thousands of addresses of our mailing list were backed up and safe, along with the current issue of *The Sword and Staff*! However, the deleting of the addresses of those requesting removal (the removal) had not been backed up. Thus, you will be getting this issue of the paper. We are sorry, but please let us know again so that we can remove your name from the mailing list.—**Editor**

Did Jesus Turn WATER into WINE?



By Chuck Northrop

THE OBVIOUS ANSWER to the question, “Did Jesus turn water into wine?” is yes. At the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee recorded in John 2:1-11, Jesus turned water into wine. However, this question does not usually ask what is meant by it. What is usually meant is, “Did Jesus make intoxicating wine?” And the answer is no. Let me explain.

The word translated “wine” in English (in Koine Greek) can refer to either alcoholic or non-alcoholic wine. At present, the term “wine” is almost used exclusively of alcoholic wine, but let us never be guilty of interpretation based solely upon modern day definitions. Consider these examples of the word “wine” being used in Scripture with reference to unfermented grape juice.

- **Joel 1:10** says, “The field is wasted, the land mourneth; for the corn is wasted: the new wine is dried up, the oil languisheth.” (This refers to grapes dried up in the fields, which could not be intoxicating).
- **Isaiah 65:8** says, “Thus saith the LORD, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it; so will I do for my servants’ sake, that I may not destroy them all.” (Alcoholic wine in the cluster? No, the juice of the grape while in the cluster could not be intoxicating).
- **Jeremiah 48:33** says, “And joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; and I have caused wine to fail from the winepresses: none shall tread with shouting; their shouting shall be no shouting.” (The wine of fresh squeezed grapes coming out of the winepress is grape juice and could not be fermented). Certainly other passages could be considered, but these are suffi-

cient to illustrate that the word “wine” can refer to alcoholic wine or simply grape juice.

The immediate context of John 2:1-11 is quite clear. The guests at the marriage feast of Cana were able to discern between the quality of the drink that the Lord had made and that which had already been served. If intoxicating wine had been served, and people “well drunk” or “drunk freely” (American Standard Version, 1901) of it (verse 10), then they would not have had such keen discernment. Though the amount is not specified as to what they had previously drunk, if they consumed the six water pots that Jesus had the servants fill with water and which contained “two or three firkins apiece” (verse 6), then they would have consumed somewhere between 106 to 162 gallons of booze! This is far more than enough to make the most casual drinker drunk. Those who twist this account to condone social drinking say the term “well drunk” refers to the idea that the crowd was so drunk that they could not distinguish. However, the point of “the governor of the feast” to the bridegroom is that the guests were able to discern between the “worse” and the “good wine.” If it is the case that these wedding guests were so drunk that they could not distinguish, then the Lord made the six pots of alcoholic beverage for those who were already strongly under the influence, and caused them to be even more drunk! Thus, the “good wine” of the wedding feast of Canaan must have been the fresh juice of the grape.

Also, consider the logical consequence of those who want to use this passage to justify the consumption of alcoholic beverages. Their argument goes something like this: “Since Jesus produced alcoholic wine, then it is morally right for a person to drink it.” However, notice that their logic takes them further than most of them want to go. Since Jesus produced alcoholic wine (as they claim), then not only would it be morally right to drink it, it would be morally right to produce it, sell it, distribute it, and make a living from it. But since that would most certainly cause some to stumble, then it must be morally right to cause someone to stumble. However, the logical consequence of their argument would oppose the Lord’s teaching (Luke 17:1-2). No the reasoning is a foolish argument that has no foundation in Scripture.

Further, consider the general context of the Bible. Habakkuk wrote, “Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!” (Habakkuk 2:15). The

(Continued on Next Page)

Did Jesus Turn WATER into WINE?

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sin Habakkuk is rebuking is the sin of contributing to drunkenness. If Jesus supplied intoxicating wine to the wedding guests at Cana, then He contributed to their intoxication. Not only did Jesus contribute to it, He, also, condoned and encouraged people to get completely soused! Since intoxication is sinful, then Jesus sinned, and the "woe" of Habakkuk would be upon Him. If this be the case, then it would be better for Jesus "that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea" (Luke 17:2). As a perfect man, Jesus could not have turned water in alcoholic wine and offer such to others.

Another passage to consider in this context is Proverbs 23:31-32, which says, "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." If Jesus has turned water into intoxicating wine, then He would have caused others to look upon the wine when it is red opposing the wisdom of Solomon. Since Jesus is "greater than Solomon" (Matthew 12:42), He would know the wisdom of sobriety and would not tempt others with an intoxicating beverage. Again, Solomon wrote, "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1).

"What, then, was the miracle of the wedding feast in Cana?" The miracle of Cana was that Jesus surpassed or transcended the normal amount of time and the natural process that it takes to produce and harvest grape juice. That, which normally takes months, took Jesus but a moment. Augustine wrote, "For he on that marriage-day made wine in the six jars which he ordered to be filled with water he who now makes it every year in the vines; for, as what the servants had poured into the water- jars was turned into wine by the power of the Lord, so, also, that which the clouds pour fourth is turned into wine by the power of the self-same Lord." (As quoted in "Bible Wines" by William Patton, page 91.)

"How could this be? Did they have any methods of preservation of grape juice in the first century?" Yes. In fact, they had several methods. In the book "Bible Wines," the author, William Patton, discusses four methods that the ancients used for the preservation of grape juice. One such method is to keep air completely excluded, a method often used today. R. C. Foster in his book, "Studies in the Life of Christ," said, "A Greek wine ship of the second century B. C. found by divers off

the southern coast of France several years ago contained a great number of wine flasks that had been sealed so tight that after more than 2,000 years the sea water had not seeped into them."

With close examination, we must conclude that the Lord did not make intoxicating wine at the marriage feast in Cana of Galilee. "Did Jesus turn water into wine?" Yes. "Did Jesus turn water into intoxicating wine?" Absolutely Not!



**If you DROWN
YOUR LIFE and
CARES in
BOOZE,
you will find that
BOOZE will return
the "FAVOR."**



Alcohol has caused and/or contributed to broken homes, every kind of accident imaginable, disease both physical and mental, poverty, and crimes of every kind. Since its effect is such, it is beyond my own imagination why anyone would ever want to justify its use, let alone mar the Lord's perfect example with its production and distribution. Its use is not social in any way, but is in every way antisocial. Its defense by sweet-talking, soft-pedaling, so-called preachers is religiously hypocritical, morally irresponsible, and socially despicable. It has victimized the unborn, children, teenagers, the middle aged, and the old. It has victimized business people and laborers, country folks and city folks, the rich and the poor. There is probably not one person who has not felt its evil bite and its viperous sting! It is beyond my reasoning power to understand how people who claim to be spiritually minded and morally upright will rationalize its use. Blood has filled our streets because of this vile beverage. Graves have filled our hills and vales because of this evil drink. Reproach has filled our nation because of this wicked intoxicant. Corruption has filled our society because of this corrupted liquor. Shame and disgrace have filled our homes because of malicious booze. Rather than justifying its use, let us stand diametrically opposed to it for "wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise" (Proverbs 20:1).—**Selected** □

Robbed of Joy

AN OLD MAN was asked what had robbed him of joy the most in his lifetime. He replied, "Things that never happened!" Someone has cited these three keys to happiness: (1) Fret not—He loves you (John 13:1), (2) Faint not—He holds you (Psalm 139:10), (3) Fear not—He keeps you (Psalm 121:5). □



BARBS

...with a POINT

WHAT you think, you are (Proverbs 23:7; 4:23).

When all is said and done, there is usually more said than done.

We can endlessly confess our sins to God, and even confess them to one another, but it will avail us nothing unless we forsake them.

If you are going in the wrong direction, you need to make a "YOU" turn.

You are not old enough to become a Christian unless you are old enough to accept the responsibility of being a Christian.

Religious feelings and experiences to be valid must correspond to the truthfulness of God's Word.

You are not right with God if you are not living right (and you are not living right unless you are righteous).

If you do not believe the truth, and accept that truth is absolute, you can never have any assurance.

It is good to take a stand for Christ, but it is not enough to just stand there; we are to move on out and run the Christian race.

It is good to have a time to play, but don't play with your time.

Because your friends do wrong, and you are influenced by your association with them to do wrong, does not relieve you from the responsibility that you have done wrong.

If you are not honest, you lack the basic ingredient that holds all morality together.

Did you arrive at your religious convictions by studying the Bible or just simply to accommodate your situation?

It is meaningless to talk about the brotherhood of man aside from the fatherhood of God.

Many are unbelievers today, not because they are atheists, but because they are God-haters and don't want to be restrained by any moral authority.

It is hard to be a caring person when the only person you care about is yourself.

When you are in the wrong, it is no time to talk about your rights (except to get right with God).

It is easy for a "high-strung" person to get out of tune with the Lord.

Whether wealth is sinful or not is determined by how you get it, what you do with it after you get it, and what it does with you.

Weak people need a strong government; strong people need little government.

If "everybody is doing it," that is a good reason for us to question whether we should even consider doing it (Matthew 7:13-14).

When we "let up" on being "down on sin," sin will soon get us down.

The closer we try to get to God the more we realize just how far away from Him we really are.

Only the weak feel that they must prove that they are strong.

Some people are so steeped in sectarianism that trying to communicate with them is like casting your pearls before swine (Matthew 7:6).

If the practice of homosexuality is not wrong, there is no such thing as wrong.

If you are "bored to death" by the preaching and teaching of God's Word, chances are that you are already dead (spiritually).

Lies have no legs on which to stand, but they have wings and can fly both near and far.

It is not a sin to be tempted (Hebrews 4:15), but "when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:14-16).

If God would bless you in proportion to your generosity toward Him, how would you fare?

When you are treated wrong as a Christian, that does not give you the right to retaliate. □



The Words We Say...

A careless word may kindle strife;
A cruel word may wreck a life;
A bitter word may hate instill;
A brutal word may smite and kill;
A gracious word may smooth the way;
A joyous word may light the way;
A timely word may lessen stress;
A loving word may heal and bless.

—Selected

Questions Over **“FIRST THINGS”** *in the Bible*

1. What does the first verse of the Bible say?
2. What did God do on the first day of creation?
3. Who was the first man to take another's life?
4. Who was the first man to have more than one wife?
5. Who was the firstborn son of Jacob?
6. Where is the first time the word "holy" is found in the Bible?
7. What was the first of the Ten Plagues that came upon Egypt?
8. After leaving Egypt, who were the first to fight against the Israelites in the wilderness?
9. Which is the first of the Ten Commandments?
10. Of the commandments, which was the first with promise?
11. In people being stoned to death for crimes under the Law, who were to cast the first stones?
12. Who was the first king of Israel?
13. Who in the Bible is said to be the first and the last?
14. Who did the Jews believe would first come before the Messiah?
15. What did Jesus instruct to seek first before material things, and then they would be added?
16. Before we can help an erring person, what does Jesus say we first must do?
17. Before a person can be a disciple and follow Christ, what does Jesus say he must first do?
18. Who did Jesus say should be the first to cast a stone at the woman taken in adultery?
19. What commandment did Jesus say was the first and great commandment?
20. What did Jesus tell the Pharisees that should first be done if they would have the outside of their cup and platter clean?
21. When Jesus was arrested, to whom was he first taken?
22. On which day of the week was Christ raised from the dead?
23. Who was the first person to see Christ after his resurrection?
24. In the list of the apostles, who is always listed first?
25. Who was the first person to suffer martyrdom in the early church?
26. Who was the first Gentile converted to Christ?
27. Where were the disciples first called Christians?
28. Who was the first apostle put to death?
29. Which church was the first church started in Europe by Paul?
30. Who were Paul's first converts in Philippi?
31. According to Acts 20:7, why did the church meet upon the first day of the week?
32. Who is called the firstfruits of those who slept?
33. What did Paul tell the Corinthians to do on the first day of the week?
34. What household does Paul call the firstfruits of Achaia?
35. Who did Paul say first gave themselves to the Lord, and then gave of their means?
36. Before men are set aside to be elders and deacons, what does Paul say first is to be done?
37. What did the high priest first have to do before offering sacrifices for the people's sins in the Old Testament?
38. What does John say as to why we love God?
39. Which church in the book of Revelation is said to have lost its first love?
40. In the book of Revelation, of whom is it said that the second death has no power over?



Answers to:

Questions Over **“FIRST THINGS” in the Bible**

1. Genesis 1:1; 2. Genesis 1:3-5; 3. Genesis 4:1-12; 4. Genesis 4:19; 5. Genesis 49:3; 6. Exodus 3:5; 7. Exodus 7:19-25; 8. Exodus 17:8-14; Numbers 24:20; 9. Exodus 20:3; 10. Deuteronomy 5:16; Ephesians 6:1-3; 11. Deuteronomy 17:6-7; 12. 1 Samuel 11:15; 13. Isaiah 44:6; Revelation 1:17; 14. Mark 9:11-13; 15. Matthew 6:33; 16. Matthew 7:1-5; 17. Luke 14:27-33; 18. John 8:3-11; 19. Matthew 22:37-38; 20. Matthew 23:25-26; 21. John 18:13; 22. Mark 16:9; 23. Mark 16:9; John 20:1-18; 24. Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:14-19; Luke 6:13-16; Acts 1:12-13; 25. Acts 7; 26. Acts 10 and 11; 27. Acts 11:26; 28. Acts 12:1-2; 29. Acts 16:12; 30. Acts 16:12-15; 31. Acts 20:7; 32. 1 Corinthians 15:20; 33. 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 34. 1 Corinthians 16:15; 35. 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 36. 1 Timothy 3:10; 37. Hebrews 7:27; 38. 1 John 4:19; 39. Revelation 2:1-5; 40. Revelation 20:6; Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12; 3:1-4. □



The Bible recognizes no faith that does not lead to obedience, nor does it recognize any obedience that does not spring from faith. The two are opposite sides of the same coin. □



*The Word of God will keep you from sin and
sin will keep you from the Word of God.*



Suppressed Hope

AS Vice President, George Bush represented the United States at the funeral of former Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev. Bush was deeply moved by a silent protest carried out by Brezhnev's widow. She stood motionless by the coffin until seconds before it was closed. Then, just as the soldiers touched the lid, Brezhnev's wife performed an act of great courage and hope, a gesture that must surely rank as one of the most profound acts of civil disobedience ever committed: She reached down and made the sign of the cross on her husband's chest.

There in the citadel of secular, atheistic power, the wife of the man who had run it all hoped that her husband was wrong. She hoped that there was another life, and that that life was best represented by Jesus who died on the cross, and that the same Jesus might yet have mercy on her husband. □

—Christianity Today



The Fast Lane

HAVE YOU ever watched kids on a merry-go-round? Or really listened to the fall of gentle rain? What about following the meandering of a deer in the meadow? Or enjoying the songs of springtime?

Have you ever really enjoyed the tranquility of a beautiful sunset? Or the peacefulness of the early morning hours? Have you ever been awed by the sight of the mighty sun breaking the horizon of a new day? No? Then you need to slow down. Take time to help life sing its song. Time is short. The music won't last.

Do you run through each day on the fly? Busy! Hurried! Are you really accomplishing a lot or are you simply in a busy rut? When the day is done, do you lie in your bed with the next hundred chores running through your head? You do? Then you need to slow down. Take time to help life sing its song. Time is short. The music won't last.

Do you ever tell your child, "We'll do it tomorrow"? But in your hurry-hurry, fail to notice that his heart is broken? Or maybe its with others...have you ever lost touch with a dear friend? Have you ever let a good friendship die just because you thought you were too busy to drop a card or make a call? You have? Then you need to slow down. Take time to help life sing its song. Time is short. The music won't last.

When you run so fast to get somewhere, you miss half the fun of getting there. Why worry and hurry through your day? Life, hurried through, is like an unopened gift, thrown away. Wasted. Lost. Life was never intended to be a race, with each day only granted to see how rapidly we could rush through it.

Slow down. Enjoy life. Take time to help life sing its song. And listen to its beautiful music. The song will soon be over. "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23).—Selected

(We need to not only slow down and smell the roses, we need to pick a few along the way—Editor)

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Answers to:
BIBLE QUESTIONS

1. 1 Peter 3:20, 21; 2 Peter 2:5; Genesis 6:1-13 (7:7); 2. Deuteronomy 29:23; 3. Mount Sinai: Exodus 19:11-23 (20:1-17); Deuteronomy 4:9-13 (5:1-21); Exodus 24:12-18; 1 Kings 19:8; 4. Exodus 34:28-35; 5. Numbers 20:22-29 (33:37-39); 6. Numbers 31:8 (Joshua 13:22); Numbers 22; 7. Exodus 23:28 (Deuteronomy 7:20-24); 8. Ezekiel 16:49-50; 9. Jonah 1:17 (Matthew 12:39-40); 10. (1) Enoch was a prophet who prophesied (Jude 14 & 15); (2) Noah was a preacher of righteousness (2 Peter 2:5); (3) Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds (Acts 7:22); (4) The names of the magicians who confronted Moses (2 Tim. 3:8); (5) The archangel Michael and the devil disputing about the body of Moses (Jude 9); and perhaps others; 11. John 2:1-5; Mark 3:31-35 (3:20-21); 12. Matthew 13:55; 13. Matthew 23:23; Luke 11:42; 14. Phil-lemon, Colossians, Ephesians and Philippians (written during his first Roman imprisonment; and 2 Timothy (written during his second Roman imprisonment); 15. Acts 23:6-8; 16. (1) True 17. Galatians 1:17-18; 18. Acts 21:31-32 ("chief captain," chiliarchos, was over a 1,000; "centurian" was over a 100); 19. Mentioned in 1 Corinthians 5:9, Colossians 4:16 and 3 John 9; 20. 2 Corinthians 6:1-10. □

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