

GOOD NEWS

Opened Eyes



"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law. Psalms 119:18.

There are many advantages of believing in Jesus. Just one of them is that you can see things others can not. Further, you even have the privilege of seeing what others see more clearly than they do because of the presence and power of Christ. Ps.27 assures us that knowing God brings light to one's life, together with the capacity to see what others can not see. There are four stories in the Scriptures where we are told that God opened someone's eyes so that they could see what they could not see apart from His quickening touch.

HAGAR's EYES : The first such story is in Gen.21. It is part of the Abraham narrative. Hagar and Ishmael after being driven out into the wilderness run out of food and water. Hagar cries to God in despair. God hears and opens her eyes and she sees a well of water. Vs.19. There is more than enough to meet their needs. Here was a life-saving resource she could not see without the quickening, eye-opening touch of God. Yes, we too need that touch to see the vast resources God has reserved for those who love Him. I cor.2:9.

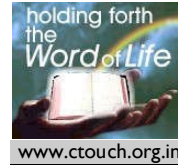
BALAAH'S EYES: In Numbers 22, we read of Balaam and his donkey. A pagan king offered great sums of money to Balaam if only he would curse Israel. As Balaam travelled, intending to gain this wealth, his donkey stopped on the way. God opened Balaam's eyes to see the angel of the Lord in front of his recalcitrant donkey. Now its surely interesting when a donkey sees better than his master! Balaam saw the money, the wealth. That's what he wanted to see. Thus there was no way he could see the angel of God. God preserved this ludicrous story in part, to let us see that unless we allow God to touch our lives, we risk spending our lives pursuing that which is, at best, inane. We may even pursue that which is evil and never know that we are on the wrong track. That's really the story of John Newton, the writer of 'Amazing Grace'. Isn't it ?

SERVANT'S EYES : In the fascinating little tale about the prophet Elisha and his servant in 2 kings 6, we read about the Syrians who were hostile to Israel. In order to capture Elisha, they located and surrounded the city where Elisha lived with Syrian troops. Frightened Elisha's servant pointed out the soldiers and the chariots around them. Then in response to Elisha's request, God opened the servant's eyes and he saw the skies filled with horses and with chariots of fire, all set to defend Elisha. Yes, praise God. Do you see that ? I John 4:4.

DISCIPLES' EYES: On the Sunday after the crucifixion two disciples walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They wept as they went. Suddenly, a stranger joined them and began to enquire and expound to them from the O.T. texts regarding the Messiah. Later while He was breaking bread with the two friends, their eyes were opened. Luke 24. The living Christ is as present today as literally as He was with Cleopas and his friend. They didn't recognize Him until He opened their eyes. Someday, perhaps today, you will need Him. You will never know He's there unless you let Him open your eyes. Have you done already? Or Will you let Him open your eyes today and now? Amen !!

> Free copies can be ordered from : Green Pastures, P. O. Box 71, Thane- 400 601. Mumbai. Tel/Fax: 022 2597 0650. Cell: 098920 93534
ao58@live.com. www.aothniel.net & www.ctouch.org.in

Green Pastures- A publication of Calvary's touch Ministries, Mumbai. (for private circulation only)



Green Pastures

~for healthy growth



to encourage, edify & equip you

Psalm 23

Volume 1. Issue 5.

Jesus Christ is Lord

May 2010



MINISTRY VISION

- To make quality, reproducing disciples. Mat 28:18-20
- To present each one perfect in Christ. Col.1:28-29.
- To reach the unreached. Rom.15:20.
- To defend the faith. Jude 3.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Welcome
- Doctrine
- Foundations
- Spirit's Fruit
- Encouraging
- Youth lifestyle
- Practical life
- For Women
- Family life
- Leadership
- Bible study
- News, Views
- Missions
- Qs & Ans
- Good News

2Timothy 2:21. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

Welcome. Today, there are many believers who are not being used by the Lord. Some people think that they are not useful. But the fact is, they are not usable!

A Vessel for the Master's Use: Believers in the Lord Jesus are like various vessels in a big house. Though there are costly as well as cheap vessels, only those which are cleansed are used by the Master. We are saved by God's grace through faith in the Lord Jesus so that we can become ready for every good work that God already planned before hand. Ephesians 2:8-10. God wants to use every believer in His house to serve Him and others for His glory. But first the vessel needs to be purged from all uncleanness to become useful for the Master. If our lives are not clean, God can not use us- we may be talented, gifted or possess much knowledge, etc. Lord Jesus said to His disciples that they were clean by the Word He had spoken to them. John 15:3. God's Word has cleansing, sanctifying properties. Sound teaching builds lives and helps believers grow in holiness. For God character is more important than our charisma or comfort. He delights to use those who are sanctified and set apart for His exclusive use in His kingdom work. Today, God is looking for such vessels who are willing to be separated and surrender themselves for the use of the Master.

Praise God for this fifth issue of Green Pastures. God is continuing to use this small tool to minister to many pastors, leaders, believers and even unsaved and non-Christians! As I move around, I give away copies to people in shopping centers and to those who visit me, etc. The Holy Spirit is speaking to people in their needs using these short messages. To God be all glory as we see the Word of God reaching to the far ends of this unreached land of millions, who are hungry for His pure and powerful Word.

This month, as you feed on the Green Pastures, I request you to recommend to at least one more person who can also receive it free and feed on for healthy growth. You can send addresses by SMS to my mobile no 98920 93534.

Remember, those who recommend more than 5 addresses will receive a free gift of CD/DVD or a book. Grab it now!

Your prayers and support are appreciated. I welcome your comments/suggestions. God bless you. ~ A.Othniel

DOCTRINE The Differences between OT and NT



Are you under the Old Covenant or the New Covenant ?

Believers in the Lord Jesus to Practice the New Covenant?

>> Read: Hebrews 1:1-4, 6:1-3, 7:18-19, 8: 7-13. Jeremiah 31:31-34.

"Now faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law." Galatians 3:14, 25.

OT Practices	NT Practices
<p>1. The Temple at Jerusalem: localized worship. Importance of Place. Partitions in the Temple. Separation of people from the Holy Place. Priest representing people before God.</p>	<p>No temple. Believers can gather anywhere in Jesus' Name to form the church. Believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. God comes to His people. Jn. 4:20-22. Mt.18:20. I Co 3:16-17, 6:19-20.</p>
<p>2. Priesthood: Aaron and his sons, limited to Levitical tribe only. Others NOT allowed.</p>	<p>The Priesthood of all believers in the Lord Jesus. He is the High Priest. Heb. 9:11; I Pe. 2:5,9.</p>
<p>3. Continual Animal Sacrifices at the altar. Ceremonies. No freedom from Sins. All not allowed to share in the offerings.</p>	<p>One Sacrifice of Jesus for all: I Cor.5:7. Heb.9:14. Offering of praise: 13:15. To offer our bodies as living sacrifice: Rom.12:1-3. All allowed at Lord's Table: I Cor.10,11.</p>
<p>4. Worship- external, traditional, routine. With musicians, instruments, etc. No fellowship, ministry to one another. Individualistic.</p>	<p>Internal, from the heart, in spirit and truth. Jn.4:24. Eph.5:18-20.-melody in heart I Cor. 14:26-33. Psa.141:2. Heb.10:25. Fellowship with one another- corporately.</p>
<p>5. Teachers: Priests and Prophets for guiding, teaching, explaining the law, etc. Fathers to teach children at home. Through visions, dreams, direct voice, etc</p>	<p>God's Word useful: 2 Tim.3:15-17. 2:15. Apostles & Prophets foundational: Eph.2:20. To do work of an Evangelist: 2 Tim.4:5. I Cor.14:3. Eph. 4:11-13. Heb. 5:12. Col.3:16.</p>
<p>6. Holy Spirit given to some only. E.g. some Prophets, Priests, Judges and Kings.</p>	<p>All believers are given the H.S. all Gifted. Jn.14:15-18,16:13. I Cor.12, 2 Cor.1:21. Eph.1:13,14; I John 2:20,27.</p>
<p>7. Righteousness by law and good works</p>	<p>By faith in Christ. Imputed righteousness. Rom. 5:1, 8:1-4. I Cor.1:30; Phil.3:9.</p>
<p>8. Fastings /Prayers-emphasis external</p>	<p>Inwardly-Mat.6:5-18. Secretly. Not publicly</p>
<p>9. Leadership limited to Prophets, Judges, Kings, Elders of Israel.</p>	<p>Holy Spirit through the Elders in the Church. Jn 16:13; Ac.13:2, 14:23. I Cor. 4:14-17. I Pe. 5: 2. (Initially by Apostles/Elders)</p>
<p>10. Festivals/feasts/special days to be kept. Ceremonial Washings, etc. Nu.9, Heb 9.</p>	<p>No special days except Sunday, the Lord's Day. Ac. 20:7; Gal. 4:8-11.</p>

"Christ redeemed us (from the curse of the law) so that by faith ..the promise " 2

MISSIONS

THE OTHER SIDE



He (Jesus) says to them:"Let us go over to the other side...." (Mark 4:35).

In the Mark's account of the earthly ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ, we observe that the Lord was encouraging His disciples to go to the other side. In Luke 4:43, He speaks about going to preach in the other cities and villages too. In John 10:16, He talks of the other sheep He has to bring into the fold to make it one fold. The other town, the other village, the other sheep and the other side- all speak of the needs to be met, the opportunities available for ministering to the people and the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ which He also entrusted to His disciples.

The Opportunities on the Other side: Yes, there are people everywhere and opportunities are plenty to serve them. In Mark ch.5, we see the people Jesus met and saved on the other side. The demoniac needed deliverance, the woman suffering from a deadly disease was seeking for healing and the little girl was in need of life. That's why the Lord encouraged His disciples to cross over to the other side.

Even today , we see people under bondage to various evil habits and influences of Satan struggling to be freed, and the people suffering from deadly diseases, mental sicknesses, broken hearts and ruined homes longing for healing and health in their lives. There are also people who are not really living meaningfully, but are just existing; they need the new life and the abundant life Jesus came to give. (John. 10:10).

The Preparation for the Other side: In Mark 4:35-41, we read how the Lord takes the disciples through the storm. It is His process of preparing them for the ministry on the other side. Through that experience their faith was strengthened and their understanding of His person and presence was enlightened, for they saw His mighty power demonstrated before their very own eyes. Yes, even today such preparation through the storms of life is essential to impart His resurrection life and power to those who respond to the call of the other side and venture to cross over, with the Heavenly Servant to serve the 'others' with the love of God. May we catch the vision of the other side.

"Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." John 4:35

Do your Work

As many people these days are much discouraged by others or conditions around them, I am writing here about doing your work and finishing it joyfully.

Keep about your work (that God has given you). Do not flinch because the lion roars, do not stop to stone devil's dogs; do not fool away your time chasing the devil's rabbits. Do your work. Let liars lie, let corporations resolve, let the devils do his worst; but see to it that nothing hinders you from fulfilling the work that God given you. He has not commanded you to get rich. He has never bidden you defend your character. He has not set you at work to contradict falsehood (about yourself) which Satan and his servants may start to peddle. If you do those things, you will do nothing else; you will be at work for yourself and not for the Lord. Keep at your work. Let your aim be as steady as a star. You may be assaulted, wronged, insulted, slandered, wounded and rejected; you may be abused by the foes, forsaken by friends, and despised and rejected of men. But see to it with steadfast determination, with unflinching zeal, that you pursue the great purpose of your life and object of your being until at last you can say, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do." (John 17: 4). Amen!

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS Signs & Wonders



Question: These days many claim to do miracles. How do we

discern the truth and not be carried away by deceivers?

Answer: The gifts of the Spirit, miracles, revelations, and supernatural phenomena accompany the Christian life, and signs and wonders are historically part of the preaching of the Gospel. This qualifies the Church as a source of knowledge concerning spiritual matters. Today, as rationalism and philosophic apologetic arguments are rejected by a society hungry for supernatural encounter, the church needs to provide people with proper scriptural balance concerning doctrine and experience. Because signs and wonders generate excitement and motivate the church toward godly activity, Satan attempts to infect, deflect, and corrupt every such scenario, in order to frustrate the equipping of the saints. He distorts the balance between doctrine and experience by reversing the biblical pattern, encouraging human orchestration, mind manipulation, and man-made emulation of the supernatural.

CLEAR BIBLICAL GUIDANCE- What should Christians do? **First**, leave miracles to God. If He performs a miracle, and He often does, it is His business and our blessing. **Second**, memorize scriptural guidelines. If Jesus carries, the 21st-century church will witness many signs and wonders, and those miracles belonging to the Almighty will compliment the following biblical rules:

1. They will be based on the Word. All Scripture is the inspired Word of God and is the final authority in all church activity. If a situation within the church contradicts the clear teachings of the Scripture, then the activity must be disregarded. We look to the model of the church in the Book of Acts and ask: Is this activity something we see happening in the first church? Is there a biblical precedent for it?

2. They will be decent and orderly. There's no doubt that unusual things happen when people experience the reality of God. The manifest presence of God often brings a spontaneous and emotional reaction from those who experience it. People often behave in otherwise uncharacteristic ways in the liberating presence of the Holy Spirit. But, Paul cautioned the church at Corinth not to allow their newfound liberty in Christ to become a stumbling block to the unsaved or to confuse those who were weak in the faith. He commanded, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14:40).

3. They will bring people to repentance. Repentance is central to the preaching of the gospel and is vital for the miracle of the new birth to occur. Jesus commanded that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). It is the two-fold pattern of evangelism--preaching the gospel and bringing people to repentance--that contains "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). Satan would abolish this activity, but all true manifestations of God will include opportunities for repentance.

4. They will exalt Jesus Christ. In Revelation 19:10 we see how an angel refuses worship. If you want to know whether a manifestation is from God, ask a simple question: Does it seek to focus glory on Christ or someone else? It is always the function of Biblical signs and wonders to glorify Jesus.

5. They will edify the Body of Christ. Some people confuse this with "entertain" the body. While there is nothing wrong with laughing and enjoying our church services, there is a very real difference between edification and entertainment. Jesus said that a "tree is known by its fruit" (Matt. 12:33). The end result of all church activity should serve to build us up in our most holy faith and unify us in singleness of purpose and service toward God. Also, Paul taught in 1 Corinthians, chapter 13, that every manifestation of the Holy Spirit will produce love among the believers. If an activity within the church causes us to love and accept each other with a godly love, then that activity should be encouraged. **6. They will nurture evangelism.** Our Lord commanded, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). When signs and wonders within the church are breathed of God, the result is evangelism. Note how Jesus combined evangelism with supernatural manifestations (17-18)

CONCLUSION: Jesus said "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign" (Matt. 12: 39). He also said "These signs shall follow them that believe." Simply put, believers must not seek physical and mystical signs, even if prompted to do so at popular Christian gathering places. We are commanded to preach the Gospel, and to leave signs and wonders to the sovereignty of God. If we follow the simple biblical pattern, miracles of the Living God will be ours when necessary. ><>

"... contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." Jude 3. 18

ENCOURAGEMENT

Why We Can't Live Without Hope



How to Keep Hope Alive...For Tomorrow We Cannot Control.

The great Reformist, Martin Luther once said: "Everything that is done in the world is done by hope." Researchers have found that a hopeful attitude can lead to courage in the face of danger and to perseverance in the midst of despair.

"Hope is an amazing God-given gift. It fuels your dreams, lightens your spirits, and lifts your despair. When life becomes a battlefield, hope digs in and fights the good fight", writes Lewis Smedes in "Standing on the Promises."

Real Experience

What prompted me to write this article is the untimely death of two -a young married man in Ahmednagar, and another, a young mother of two small growing children at Thane, in their prime age some years ago. Both were needed by their families with small children. Both committed suicide in their own homes. The reason: depression-both were neglected by their own relatives! Both were God-fearing and spiritual-minded. But both lost hope to live and see the new year! How sad when you know that it could have been avoided? How shocking to know that there are people around them who could have helped them live with hope and overcome their depression and yet...?

Why feel hopeless?

When you don't see any need to live, you do not want to live. But what should make us to live? Each of us lives in settings where we are surrounded by desperate people. Often characterized by feelings of uselessness, meaninglessness, purposelessness, and hopelessness. Such a plight is a severe plight-An unknown author has said : One can live without money, fame, and family. But one cannot live without hope. William Barclay adds these words : There are no hopeless situations in life. There are only individuals who have grown hopeless about them. Often, many find no reason and motivation to live, once something you were holding onto snaps, you fall.

The Reasons for Life

first of all, we live because we are created to live this life till the time comes to go. You are worth more than you imagine. There does not exist among the millions of beings that live on earth another being like you nor another with the same fingerprints. Don't lose the opportunity to learn and improve yourself more each day, to understand the special and elevated reason that brought you to live on this planet ... because you are better than you think you are.

It is the Creator's plan to place us in this world with a definite purpose and program. It is to know Him and glorify Him. Many are trapped in the worldly pleasures and materialism and never come to realize who and where God is in their lives. Many are in so-called "Maya"- the illusion of this world. Apostle John says about what is in this world is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, which are not from the Father who created us and gave us this life" (1 John 2:15-17). And so as they are temporal so also we live a very indefinite and hopeless lives, ready to end due to any small problem. When you try to make yourself happy by the things in this world apart from the Creator who alone can give you abundant life, you will have no hope at all when overwhelmed by the pressures of this sinful world. But when we get salvation out of this self-centered and selfish living, can we make this life truly meaningful and wonderful to live.

... Contd on page 5 >>

3 "God of all comfort, comforts us...so that we can comfort others" 2co 1:3



“ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” Hebrews 11:1.

*** The Definition of Faith:**

- **Dictionary:** Faith is belief, trust, fidelity, or loyalty to something or someone. e.g. We relax and without looking, place or whole weight on a chair; faith says we will not fall. Faith is simple enough for the child to fulfill but too sublime for the sage to comprehend fully or explain satisfactorily.
- **Bible definition:** Faith is the conviction in the heart based on the trustworthy evidence of God's Word. It is not the blind act of the soul; faith in God rests upon the best evidence, the infallible Word of God. It is like the arm that takes what God is offering . It is in contrast to what man can do on his own and achieve. Unlike "works", faith simply trusts and depends upon a source outside of self.

*** The Necessity of Faith:**

Heb. 11:6, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him."
There can be no dealings with the invisible God without faith in His existence. We must believe that He exists; that He rewards men; this confidence is called faith.

*** Faith is necessary to salvation. Acts 16:31; Eph. 2:8,9.**

And all the Spiritual Blessings and Promises of God are received and experienced by Faith alone.

By it saints:

Live. Gal.2:20.
Stand. Rom.11:20; 2Cor.1:24.
Walk. Rom.4:12; 2Cor.5:7.
Obtain a good report. Heb.11:2.
Are supported. Ps.27:13; 1Tim. 4:10.

*** The Nature of Faith:**

There are two kinds of faith:
* One is **Intellectual faith:** a head knowledge of the historical Christ and a general acceptance of the Bible. No action and no conviction at all. It is passive.
* Second is the **Conviction in the heart:** belief from the heart that causes the person to act on his faith. This is active. This is also known as the Saving Faith-it saves us from our sins as we trust in the Lord Jesus wholeheartedly as our Savior and Lord. Jn.1:12; Rom.10:9,10.

*** The Source of Faith:**

1. The Divine side: Faith is the gift of the Triune God

- a. Given by God the Father. Rom. 12:3; 1Cor.12:9.
- b. Given by God the Son. Heb.12:2. Lk. 17:5.
- c. Given by God the Spirit: Gal.5:22.

2. The human side. Rom. 10: 17.

As we hear the Word of God, faith is produced and grows. Acts 4:4; Mk. 9:24; Matt.17:19-21. ...Contd on next page >>



Calvary's touch Ministries, India
><> *Rebuilding lives ~ Multiplying Disciplemakers since 1985!*

God gifted, prepared, called and has been using A. Othniel in full-time ministry since 1985, based in Mumbai. To God be all the glory for His Grace, So Amazing! Here are the opportunities for your involvement. You can be a catalyst for ministry in your city/State, to make a difference for God's glory!

- > **Counseling Services/Workshops:** for youth, families & leaders.
- > **Personality Development Seminars/Classes:**-for youth/students.
~to improve communication skills, relationships, and lifestyle, etc.
- > **Systematic and Practical Biblestudy Classes:-** for all.
~to understand & apply God's Word correctly to your daily life.
- > **Mentoring & Disciplemaking Training & Network:**
- to equip you to multiply and maximize your potential for leadership
- > **Planting Disciplemaking Churches:** to make quality disciples
- > **Publishing ministry:** Green Pastures Magazine, books, tracts, etc
- > **Media ministry:** production of CD/DVDs- audio and video messages, etc
- > **Internet Ministry & Website Solutions :**
~ Websites for ministry at lowest rates! Online ministry resources for all.

If you are interested to involve with us, please contact us >>

Thank you and God bless you for your partnership.

A. Othniel. Calvary Centre, P.O.Box 71, Thane – 400601 (Mumbai)

Email: ao58@live.com. Tel No. 022 2597 0650.

Cell nos: 98920 93534, 80971 38634. www.aothniel.net

Plans, Events & Offers

- > **City & State-wise Youth Festivals**– organizers needed. Plz contact us.
- > Leadership Training for church leaders– all over India. Partner with us.
- > **Website at lowest rates!**- domain reg & unlimited webspace, email ids.
- > Recommend addresses for mailing this magazine and get **free CD/DVD**.
- > **Order any of our books and get 2 books on Marriage free!**
- > Help available for your problems/crises. Call or Contact us today!
- > **Messages of A.Othniel available** in Audio & Video CD/DVDs in English, Hindi & Telugu. Sent for a free-will offering. Order them now!
- > Books written by A.Othniel available in English, Hindi, Marathi & Oriya.
- > Join the **Disciplemakers Network** and receive regular book/ CD **free!**

BIBLE STUDY > Contd from previous page



The Power of Blessing: through the life of Jacob

3. *The Personal Confrontation:* It was never like this before! Jacob came face to face with God and he can not escape the questioning of God. Jacob had the experience of responding to the personal questions. He was able to deceive his own father by giving a false reply to his eager query. Jacob could not dare God with his tactics! Everything is open and naked before God's all-seeing eye! God asked Jacob, "what is your name?" In that one simple question, God touched the heart and the very personality of Jacob that night. That was the turning point in his life. That changed his life once for all. He had to answer God; he can not give false reply as he did to his father. And Jacob confessed the truth and accepted who he was really-"Jacob" The name means, supplanter, deceiver, the one who takes the place of others. That was the true confession which brought him the divine blessings. God wants to hear such true confessions today from those who are coming to Him for His blessings.

God's questions brought tremendous changes in the lives of those who had this privilege of being questioned personally. E.g. Elijah was asked where was he and what was he doing? And that brought him courage and empowerment and new direction to his ministry. Also, in the life of Jonah. God's questioning is also to explain and convince him of His good plans and wise decisions. In the N.T., the Lord Jesus, after He rose from the dead, met Mary Magdalene crying outside the tomb. He asked her by calling her name, why she was crying? That helped her to turn herself and see for herself who was standing before her!

What a wonderful revelation to comfort her in sorrow and pain!

Today, God is asking your name. What is it? What are you, really? Tell God who you are. What is your life like, before He could bless you. God wants you to be frank and honest before Him. You can not hide or cover anything before Him.

True confession opens and cleanses whatever sin we have committed and makes us acceptable to Him. True confession makes us worthy of His precious blessings.

When you pray and ask for blessings, open your heart and mind and speak out the truth before God and confess everything. Keep nothing away from Him. Make sure, you have confessed everything, before He can bless you.

God is confronting people today, one by one, as He did many years ago with that violent rebel Saul who became Paul. God deals with each person in His own way and according to His Eternal plan. This is essential to experience God's blessings. He blesses individually. Be prepared to meet thy God! He may call you today! Be ready with a correct answer.

>> To be contd >>

> **Send us your comments/suggestions. Thank you. God bless You.**

> **Read fully in a book on "The Secrets of God's Blessings".**

>> **For Counseling/Prayers: Call Calvary 98920 93534 for Victory!**

FOUNDATIONS

4. FAITH



>> Contd from previous page

* The Object of Faith:

1. God Himself: John 14:1.
2. The Word of God. Faith must be on the Bible as the revealed Word of God, true and genuine. John 5:46; Ac.24:14, 26:27; Rom.4:21 Heb.11:13.
3. The Lord Jesus Christ: Faith in itself will not save us or benefit us in any way. Faith in an object- Person of Lord Jesus Christ. Jn.6:29; Ac.20:29; Eph. 2:8,9. Rom.10:9,10.

* The Results of Faith:

1. Salvation: Mark 16:16; Acts 16:31.
2. Remission of sins: Acts 10:43; Rom. 3:25.
3. Sanctification: Acts 15:9, 26:18.
4. Justification: Acts 13:39; Rom.3:21,22,28,30, 5:1; Gal.2:16.
5. Eternal Life: John 3:15,16, 6:40,47.
6. Edification: 1 Tim.1:4; Jude 1:20.
7. Preservation: 1 Pet.1:5.
8. The Gift of the Holy Spirit: Acts 11:15-17; Gal.3:14; Eph. 1:13.
9. Victory over the devil & world: Eph. 6:16; 1Pet.5:9; 1John 5:4,5.
10. Triumphant death: Heb.11:13. and so on.

Mark 9:23, " Jesus said unto him, If you believe, all things are possible to him that believes." Lord, I want to believe, help mine unbelief and increase my faith. Amen.

>> Contd from page 3. **Why we can't live without hope**

Secondly, you have to live because there are people who need you. In fact, the world depends upon you for its survival and sustenance. Each of us have specific responsibilities to fulfill towards others. Just think of a loving wife and child depending upon their man to care for them and he is suddenly no more! Will their lives be the same again? Will they live with that original joy and excitement that life gave them initially? That's the tragedy when one man loses hope and can not see beyond his own selfish thinking.

When you always think of making yourself happy and expect others to continuously meet your demands, you are going to miss the hope to live. You have to consider the needs of others and place yourself in their shoes to see from their perspective that they need you rather than you need them. As you make every effort to realize the purpose of your life and keep in focus your responsibility towards others in your family, community and society at large, you will find meaning and worth in your living.

So commit yourself this year to celebrate life itself by living it more responsibly towards the Creator God and His creation, the world around you. Keep your hope alive, for there is always something better ahead. God has promised Eternal Life to all those who come to Him in true repentance and faith. Abundant Life and Joy are His wonderful gifts. Ask, and you shall receive, seek and you will find and knock and the door shall be opened unto you. Never give up when you fail to get what you want. Hope can get you everything oneday. Wait for that Final day-you will be victorious. Live Today to the full. Today is your day. Hope for better tomorrow. Be Encouraged.

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Rom. 15:13

5 "For by grace you have been saved through faith, not of yourselves..." Ep2:8.

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

3. Peace



* Peace is love's agreement.

Read: Galatians 5:22; Jn.14:27, 16:33; Col.3:15; Mat.5:9; Rom.5: Phil.4:7; Rom.14:17. Mat.11:28-30; Is.28:12; Heb.4:3; Rev. 14:13.

* Note the difference between the 'rest' & 'peace'.

* Rest is to be free from labor, work, burden or load due to completion or release.

Peace (Definition) is an inner state of tranquility (and rest) in the midst of trouble, confusion, sorrow and such adverse conditions.

It is the state of harmony with oneself and others or outside world.

- sometimes you may have 'rest' but not peace (that's why we say for the dead RIP!)

* Peace has to do with the state of mind and heart.

* Rest has to do with the activity of the body & mind.

The Kinds of peace - (several aspects of peace):-

1. **The peace with God:-** Because of sin, man is at war and enmity with God. James 4:4; Is.59:8,48:22; Rom.5:1; Is.53:5; Col.1:20.

The wicked have no peace because they are not at peace with God. Is.27:5; Ac.10:36; Eph.2:14; 2Cor.5:18-19.

2. **The peace of God:-** when we establish peace with God, we will receive and experience the peace of God. This is something He gives as a gift. The Holy Spirit helps to manifest and express this fruit in believer's life. Ps.29:11; Phil.4:7; Jn.14:27; 16:33; Is.26:3; Jer.14:13.

The source of peace: Father- Phil.4:7; Ps.29:11; Son-Jn.14:27, 16:33; Holy Spirit -Gal.5:22.

The contrast-The Lord came to send sword into families, society: Matt.10:34-36; Lk.12:51-53; Jn.7:43, 9:16; 1Cor.7:5; Eph.5:18-29,33, 6:1-9.

3. **The peace in ourselves:-** Man is filled with feelings of guilt, disturbance and depression as a result of sin. But when we have the peace of God ruling our hearts and minds, we will be at harmony with ourselves. Ps.4:8; Rom.8:6,3:17; Is.57:21; Lam.3:17; 1Tim.2:2.

4. **Being peacemakers:-** Giving peace to others, maintaining peace, influencing to bring this condition of tranquility & rest. Gen.13:8; Mt.5:9; Prov.12:20; Jam.3:18; Rom.14:19, 2:18; 2Cor.5:20,18; Heb.12:14; 1Cor.7:15.

How to have and cultivate peace in our personal lives?:

1. By seeking or it, since it can be found- need to be determined to get peace! Ps.34:14; 1Pet.3:11; Job 22:21; Col.3:15.

2. By loving God's Word- reading, meditating, obeying it.

Ps.119:165; Is.48:18,54:13.

3. Being Spiritually minded-controlling the thoughts.

Rom.8:6; Is.26:3; Phil.4:8; Heb.12:1-2; Mat.14:29-30.

4. By Prayer- asking God to give and believing it based on His promises.

Phil.4:4-7; Jn.16:23, 15:16, 14:27, 16:33.

5. By submitting to the control and discipline of the Holy Spirit-by not allowing sinful habits to overcome/rule over us. Rom.14:17; Gal.5:24-26.

How it is to be cultivated in the Church: Ps.133:1.

* In the worship order-1Cor.14:33.

* deliberately, making effort-2Cor.13:11.

* endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit- Eph.4:3.

* Being of the same mind-Phil.4:2.

* Esteeming the Lord's servants highly-1Thess.5:12-13.

* Fleeing sin & following peace-2Tim.2:22.

* By various ways-1Pet.3:8-13.

* Reconciliation-Matt.5:23-24.

" Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all." 2 Thessalonians 3:16.

Gal 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

BIBLE STUDY

The Secrets of God's Blessings



The Power of Blessing: through the life of Jacob

>> **Contd from previous issue**

Here's how Jacob experienced God's blessing: Gen.32:22-32.

1. *The Preparation for Blessing:* When Jacob left his uncle's place, he had earned and inherited a lot of things- people and much possessions. But he feared to take them all together to meet his brother Esau. He shrewdly planned and separated them into groups and sent them before him. And now he was left alone. He decided to contend with God for His blessing, as he'd already experienced people's blessings.

In order to meet with God, he had to send them all over and remain alone. That is the secret of blessing. You have to meet God face to face. Do not depend on others to bring blessings for you. You have to separate yourself from everything and keep aside all when you want to meet with God. Nothing should distract you nor disturb you. Nobody should come in between you and God. Even the Lord Jesus encouraged His own disciples to pray and ask the Father directly as He was going to the Father. Because all those days when He was with them, He had asked on their behalf, but now they have to come on their own to God.

Preparing oneself to meet God is essential. In fact, more deeply, the Scriptures speak about repentance -turning away from your sins before you believe and receive God's blessings.

Are you ready to meet God, face to face? Is there something you need to be separated from? God wants to meet you personally and bless you and change you.

2. *The Persistent & Prevailing Prayer:* Jacob wrestled whole night with a man. Of course, he was an angel of God, who was the Lord Himself. Jacob did not give up easily after fighting for sometime. He was so determined and desperate to get the blessing that he did not sleep nor take rest for the long journey. He said, 'unless You bless me, I will not leave you.' It was like a challenge to see who will give up or relent. And finally, the Lord confessed that Jacob had won the whole night's inter-celestial Test match! This truth is prevalent in all the Scriptures, that we need to be persistent in our prayers. We should not easily give up. The exhortations to pray without ceasing, etc remind us that God answers persistent prayers. E.g. Hannah's persistent prayer for a son.

As we become so desperate and determined to get the blessing, so also God is so determined to release His blessings freely; only He waits to see how committed we are to what we are asking Him. Are we serious about what we are fighting for or is it just a superficial childish demand? Our prayers show our attitude and spiritual maturity. What kind of things are we seeking for, whether they are pleasing to the Lord, for the welfare of others, for the building of His Kingdom, or to fulfill our own selfish desires?

A prevailing prayer is also an effective and powerful prayer. E.g. The prayer that Elijah prayed, for the rain to come and also to stop (James 5). Prevailing prayer is also characterized by faith. The Lord Jesus said, when you pray, believe that you will receive what you are asking for, and you'll have them! Amen.

Contd in the next page >>

LEADERSHIP

Successful Mentoring



2Timothy 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

Successful mentoring is a Hands-On process of helping someone succeed. Personal contact with the mentee is what makes the difference. The more time we are able to invest in a person's life the more potential there is for growth and reproduction.

Mentoring is different from supervising and advising. Effective mentoring is modeling a life style that can be pasted on to others. Whether we are a good model or bad model, mentors have tremendous potential to influence what kind of person the mentee will become.

The Bible is full of mentoring examples that help us understand modeling principles. Jesus was a master mentor giving us a perfect model for successful mentoring. As master mentor He commissioned us to make disciples by following His mentoring model.

Good mentors embrace certain distinct values. Good mentors:

1. encourage an attitude of excellence in all that we do.
2. encourage Biblical teamwork.
3. value the worth and potential of individuals.
4. encourage and value a disciplined life.
5. encourage and focus on the fundamentals of the Christian life.

Good mentors demonstrate Christ-Like behavior. Good mentors:

- 1 demonstrate a life focused on God-given purpose.
2. demonstrate a life focused on caring and giving to others.
3. demonstrate a life that challenges and attracts others to a life of success.
4. demonstrate a positive attitude in life that focuses on encouraging and motivating others.
5. develop the skill of being an understanding listener.
6. develop Biblical strategies for successful living.
7. know how to celebrate success with their mentees.

One of the greatest Biblical examples of a mentor is Joseph of Cyprus. Acts 4:36 says, that Joseph was such a good mentor that the apostles called him Barnabas, which means "Son of encouragement" or "one called alongside to help." Barnabas was a glad, encouraging, good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, effective in sharing the gospel with others.

Barnabas had the skill of enabling others to be successful in ministry. He saw the potential in Paul before the other apostles did and helped Paul enter into ministry. (Acts 9:27). >> to be contd

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

HOW TO BE CONFIDENT WITH PEOPLE

~ Learning to feel comfortable with others



If there is one quality you could have that would make you successful in motivating people or convincing people to follow your lead, that trait would be confidence. Self-confidence carries a conviction; it makes others believe in us.

Here's the value of confidence. (Heb. 10:35): "Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward." Confidence is not set in cement; it's possible to lose it.

Our choice of associates will have a tremendous bearing on our confidence level. Most people fall into two categories: Confidence builders and confidence shakers. If you are unsure of yourself, a confidence shaker can do you in.

Confidence shakers see the negative side of everything. When they get you to buy into it, the very thing that was helping you be successful becomes your downfall.

The positive message from Hebrews 10:35 is that our confidence has a great reward. If we keep and build on it, we will be more than recompensed. Confidence in oneself is the cornerstone to success. It is difficult for those who do not believe in themselves to have much faith in anyone else. Self-confidence breeds confidence in others, much like a boomerang which you cast out toward others, only to find it comes right back to you.

Why Do You Need Confidence?

1. It will give stability in every area of your life. Confidence equals contentment with self; contentment is knowing you have all you need for the present circumstances. Phil. 4:11-13 provides the basis for this thought. These verses cannot be separated because there is an absolute relationship between experiencing life's lows and enjoying it's highs. The Apostle Paul is resting on the assurance that his strength is in God alone. He understood that confidence and contentment gave him stability in every situation he encountered in his tumultuous life.

2. Confidence Stretches you. The moment that I have my foundation strong and stable, I am then in position to begin stretching. Insecure people seldom stretch because they are not willing to live on the edge of life.

e.g. Think about a rubber band which is totally useless unless it is stretched. When insecurity keeps us from stretching and growing, we end up with a life that is as unexciting and useless as a limp rubber band.

3. Confidence helps you to believe in other people. Don't we see others as we see ourselves? An insecure person, on the other hand, believes neither in himself or herself nor in others. Insecure people are afraid to risk building up others with compliments, because they are constantly in need of compliments themselves.

4. Confidence helps to build up other people. The moment you place a label on someone you begin to treat him or her accordingly. Others can sense your confidence in them and can perform better or respond positively. When you have confidence, you can bring positive change in people.

People must have affirmation and praise in order to maintain a high level of performance. Withholding negative or critical comments is not nearly as important as giving positive input through compliments and praise. Again, the only people who can do this are those who feel positive about themselves. Work plus praise increases energy, but work without praise drains energy. e.g. Paul's life of confidence: Six times he refers to confidence in his relationship to Christ. six times to his confidence in himself, and six times in relationships with others. There must be a balance because all three areas are related. Without confidence in Christ we could be tempted to become egocentric and cocky. Without confidence in ourselves we are defeated, powerless Christians. Without confidence in others we are suspicious and untrusting. Paul learned this lesson and it made him a successful motivator and servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. Self-confidence is the first great requisite to great undertakings. << To be contd next month >>

7 "In quietness and confidence shall be your strength..." Isaiah 30:15

YOUTH LIFESTYLE

How to Move from Failure to Success



People often pray for "victory" which is a catch-all word meaning the end to a crisis-whether it be financial, emotional, marital, or any other major issue. Fighting for any "victory" is powerful, God-glorifying, and worthy. Once we win the victory, we need to know the biblical principles to maintain victorious living and to abide in Christ continually.

The first principle is, it is easier to obtain than to maintain. It is easier to win territory in a war than to govern the territory once the war is over. It is easier to win a person to marriage than to keep the marriage healthy and thriving after the wedding. It is easier to buy a car than to keep the car in good running condition once bought. In every area of life, it is easier to obtain than to maintain.

Secondly, God' pattern for success is a pattern of purification. God never begins or ends on a negative. God's plan for us begins with the positive and will end with the positive. We will reach our positive ends through purification. God's pattern for our lives is a pattern of growth. Under His care, we grow, expand, enlarge, and accept greater responsibility.

To grow in God, we must pass His tests of growth, which come through crisis. The crisis does not necessarily make us strong, but shows how strong we are. If we are strong enough to pass, we realize our strength and become even stronger in faith, courage, conviction, and a variety of spiritual attributes.

We can either pass or fail each test. If we fail, we carry that failure with us. The process of purification purifies us from failure.

To purify us, God presents us with the same test, and we end up experiencing the same or similar crisis again. But before God will bring us back to test us a second time, He will cause us to grow. He wants to bring us back ready this time to pass the test, to replace our failure with success, and to move on.

Accepting responsibility

So, thirdly, we must be willing to accept responsibility for failure before we are able to accept responsibility for success. By accepting responsibility for failure, we open ourselves to be tested a second time, which will purify us from the previous failure. We accept responsibility for failure which enables us to accept responsibility for success.

Often men don't want to be put to the test again. But it is only by doing it again that they can become purified from a previous failure. Many don't want to pursue an education, a job the role of parenthood, and just about any true accomplishment in life-because they don't want the responsibility for having their activities fail.

Conditioned to succeed

The fear of failure is based on the fear of death. Humans are conditioned to failure. The earth shakes; grass dies; stars fall; businesses collapse; the body decays. Death is a constant threat, as is failure. To overcome failure, we have to be converted to the positive, then reconditioned to think positively.

So, fourthly, We must be transformed to put us in the positive where we are motivated by faith, by belief, and by success. This is done by the "renewing of the mind" through washing it with the Word of God. Read Romans 12: 2; Ephesians 5:26.

... contd on next page >>

LEADERSHIP

Biblical Requirements of Leaders



Four must-have traits

Can you think of any greater privilege than to be called to be a leader in the church of Jesus Christ? The church is his Body, his Bride, the Temple of his Spirit, his Flock, his Army, and his Family. Can you think of any greater responsibility than leading his church?

This is why God's Word has laid before us such challenging requirements for Christian leadership. The standards are rightly high, not only for the sake of the church's vitality but also for the sake of the leader's vitality.

Four Qualifications The chief biblical texts that develop the requirements of leaders are: 1 Timothy 3:1-13, 2 Timothy 2:1-13, Titus 1:5-9, Acts 6:1-6, and Exodus 18:21-22. The qualifications spelled out in these passages can be summarized in four words: commitment, conviction, competency, and character.

Commitment. Are the would-be leaders clearly committed to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord? Is there a passion to know him in all his fullness? While different personality types express passion differently, there must be evidence of a fire inside to know and obey the Crucified and Risen One.

Conviction. Do the would-be leaders have biblically informed convictions-about who God is, who humans are, the meaning of history, the nature of the church, and especially the meaning of Jesus' death and resurrection? Are they learning what it means to be transformed by the renewal of the mind (Rom. 12:2), to "think Christianly" about every dimension of their lives-money, time, sex, family, recreation? For this reason, Paul warns against being too quick to call recent converts to leadership; commitment and conviction take time to deepen.

Competency. Do the would-be leaders know how to make their way through the Scriptures? Can they help others find their way around the sacred pages (2 Tim. 2:15)? Have the would-be leaders been entrusted with appropriate gifts of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:11-12, 1 Cor. 12:12-31, Rom. 12:3-8)? Do they have a working understanding of the gifts, and can they help others discern and deploy those entrusted to them? Do they have the necessary relational skills for this position? Do their relationships manifest the integrity and love of Jesus, especially in their marriage and with their children (2 Tim. 3:5)? The Kingdom of God, after all, is about righteousness; i.e. right relationship.

Character. Are the would-be leaders taking on the character of Jesus? Someone has astutely observed, "It is not a matter of perfection, but direction." Are the potential leaders moving toward greater and greater Christ-likeness? The lists of leadership requirements are finally about character. Do they exhibit self-control, hospitality, gentleness (control of anger), a quest for holiness, temperance? Is there evidence of dying to the love of money, to manipulation, to always having it one's own way? Are they faithful to their spouse ("husband of one wife")?

It should be noted that the injunction in 1 Timothy 3:4 that requires a leader to "see that his children obey him with proper respect" is not a demand for perfection. Even the best parents can have children that choose to disobey them (see Luke 15). Paul's concern is that those in leadership give their best energies and time to training their children.

The biblical qualifications for a leader are commitment, conviction, competency, and character. The greatest of these is character. Amen.

13 "...he that rules, with diligence..that God in all things may be glorified.." Rom.12:8

**Becoming Titus 2 in 2010**—women mentoring women

Titus 2:3-5 NIV says:

"Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God."

God has a magnificent and wonderful design for women. It is a design which will fulfill their created purpose, maximize their uniqueness, make them a blessing to the world, and bring fulfillment to their own lives and glory to the name of God. That design is briefly stated there in those two verses. The instruction there is God's design for women--women in the church, so that the church can have a powerful witness, and so that God can be glorified and His Word honored.

What does it mean to be a Titus 2 woman?

- Her life is characterized by love which comes from the close relationship she has with the Lord.
- She's not dependent on her husband and/or children to fill her needs.
- When her family does something wonderful, she loves it but isn't dependent on how they respond to feel significant or to be validated.
- She realizes that she won't always have that "in love" feeling all the time with her husband but knows that love is a choice.
- She shows respect to her husband and looks for ways she can verbally tell him so.
- She has a daily quiet time for prayer and reading the Bible and *...listening*.
- She enjoys sharing lessons she's learned with the younger women but also learns from them. She's a life long learner.

What are the challenges as we pursue the mission of becoming a Titus 2 woman?

We need to put Romans 12:1-2 into practice. We offer ourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God because of what Jesus did for us. And then we don't conform to the world's standards and patterns. Instead, we study His Word and allow Him to transform us *...from the inside out*.

We yield our lives to Him so that He can do a work in us and through us to impact others. When we do this, His love overflows from us and others will notice the difference. And God gets the glory. Amen. ><>

**How to Move from Failure to Success**

God taught Joshua about success. His statements conditioned Joshua and the Israelites away from the failures of slavery in Egypt, and to the successes of God's planned victories. (Joshua 1: 7,8).

Again, in Psalms God conditioned all of us to succeed in life. (Psalm 1: 1-3).

Prosperity is the natural, sequentially ordered result of righteousness in life.

God's pattern for success for our lives is not based on our ability, because we are limited by our perspective, intelligence, time, space, and our humanity. God's pattern of success is based on the limitlessness of Jesus Christ. When we are in Christ, the limits are taken off.

God's pattern for success for you is where you meet Him one to one, and God reveals His will and pattern to you personally.

No matter what may have happened to you in the past, the ultimate goal for your life is not crisis, trouble, or disaster. The ultimate goal for your life is success, holiness, righteousness, and conformity to the image of Jesus Christ. So, to begin with, have you personally committed your life to follow the Lord Jesus and be changed into His likeness? Why not decide now? Amen.

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory...forever and ever. Amen." Ephesians 3: 20-21.

Seven Rules of Motivation

#1 Set a major goal, but follow a path. The path has mini goals that goes in many directions. When you learn to succeed at mini goals, you will be motivated to challenge grand goals.

#2 Finish what you start. A half finish project is of no use to anyone. Quitting is a habit. Develop the habit of finishing self-motivated projects.

#3 Socialize with others of similar interest. Mutual support is motivating. We will develop the attitudes of our five best friends. If they are losers, we will be a loser. If they are winners, we will be a winner. To be a cowboy we must associate with cowboys.

#4 Learn how to learn. Dependency on others for knowledge is a slow time consuming processes. Man has the ability to learn without instructors. In fact, when we learn the art of self-education we will find, if not create, opportunity to find success beyond our wildest dreams.

#5 Harmonize natural talent with interest that motivates. Natural talent creates motivation, motivation creates persistence and persistence gets the job done.

#6 Increase knowledge of subjects that inspires. The more we know about a subject, the more we want to learn about it. A self-propelled upward spiral develops.

#7 Take risk. Failure and bouncing back are elements of motivation. Failure is a learning tool. No one has ever succeeded at anything worthwhile without a string of failures. <><

FAMILY LIFE "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." Proverbs 22:6.



Parents Imprint on God's Blueprint

-Parenting the preschoolers

THE PRESCHOOL FAMILY

Proverbs 22:6 has no greater elegance than in the "preschool" period of family life. Generally, stages of family life are determined by the age of the oldest child. For example, the "new parent stage" begins with the birth of the first child, culminates with the so-called "terrible twos" and dissolves rapidly into the preschool years which last roughly until the oldest child is five or six. During that period additional children may be born adding to the complexity and stress of the preschool years. However, the purity of positive family dynamics is never more evident than in these formative years of the family and the child.

Preschool children have a fierce attachment, dependency and desire for connection with their parents. At no other time in their life are they more in need of or responsive to parental attention, love and direction. As parents, there is no other time in family life where you have such unencumbered access, influence, prestige and idyllic presence in the eyes of your child. As one developmental specialist put it, "Preschool boys want to grow up to be like daddy and marry mommy, and preschool girls want to grow up to be like mommy and marry daddy" Consequently, the importance of these years relative to the character, values and spiritual well-being of children cannot be overemphasized.

Three different perspectives (the Lord's, the parents' and the child's) all leading to the same goal can be gleaned from Proverbs 22:6. In parenting preschoolers, the primary objectives are to develop the child's personality and character, and to instill constructive habits, attitudes and values that will form the foundation for the child's identity and self-concept. For Christian parents these flow from preparing a child's heart to respond to God's love and accept His gift of salvation in Christ.

The Lord's Way: The first perspective of training a child in the way to go relates to knowing God's Word and integrating it into every aspect of his/her life. The comprehensive nature of this training is laid out in Deuteronomy 6:4-9: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments ... are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door frames of your houses and on your gates." The Parents' Way: The Hebrew term for "train" refers to dedicating, equipping and preparing a child for life. The parents' task is to prepare the child for a healthy, fulfilling and meaningful life on this earth, and a life dedicated to following and serving the Lord which has eternal ramifications. The essence of this process is summarized in our title, "Parents' Imprint On God's Blueprint." Psalm 139:13-16 attests to the fact that each child is fearfully and wonderfully made (the blueprint). That special creation is entrusted to the parents to care for, train and guide (the imprint). Every parent leaves impressions (memories) that a child carries with him/her through life. Consequently, how parents train their child in the preschool years will have long- term results in the child's life and in the generations to come.

... **Contd in next page >>**

FAMILY LIFE

Parents Imprint on God's Blueprint



>> Contd from previous page

Remember the warning of Exodus 20:5: "I the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation." Parents have no more important task than that of training their children during the preschool years. Doing so is responsible parenting that pays great dividends in future stages of family life.

The Child's Way: The third perspective of training a child in the way he/she should go, that is often overlooked, is that of the child. Each child is special and unique not only in God's eyes but also in his/her own nature as a human being. Consequently, no one parenting approach fits all children. An essential quality of effective parenting is the ability to mold parenting practices to identify the unique traits and temperament of each child. Thus "the way he should go" means taking into account each child's temperament and characteristics in formulating parenting practices.

PARENTING PRESCHOOLERS: THE PROCESS

According to British psychiatrist R. D. Laing, three stages are involved in the formation of a person's value system and character. The first two stages are experienced during the preschool years and the third is not complete until the child reaches maturity. According to Laing, when a child is born the parents have the most influence on molding and forming the child's character and personality. They have this opportunity only for a short time, because once the child is exposed to the world outside the parental circle many people (teachers, peers, other adults), forces (TV, radio, print, computers) and experiences (school, community, society) compete with and maybe even reverse parental influence. Laing's three stages are called attribution, invalidation and induction.

Attribution is the period of time when the parents have almost exclusive opportunity to tell the child how to be and what the world is like. The child responds to this input because of the exclusive attachment and bonding the child senses to the parent. Invalidation has to do with parental control of the child's life. Parents choose the experiences their child is to have and the experiences that are best avoided. The chosen activities reinforce the parents' attributions about the world and what the child is to be like; the deletions are those which would harm the child or undermine the Values, habits or attitudes the parents are attempting to instill in the child. Induction begins the moment the child becomes immersed for significant periods of time in the world outside the family, typically when the child goes to school. From that point on, a contest for the child's moral allegiance ensues until adulthood when values are internalized. Based on this overview of the process, the critical importance of the preschool years and the necessity of parents attending to the attribution and invalidation stages of their child's development is clear. You will not get another opportunity to influence your child without competition from outside forces. As Christians we know who is waiting at the door to gain a foothold in our child's life: "Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1Pet. 5:8).

Matthew 19:13-15 "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." Parents who bring their preschoolers to the Lord perform the ultimate act of parental caring and demonstrate the definitive nature of parental love.

>> Let us know any needs for prayers.

Counseling is available free! Call 98920 93534 anytime! Bless you.