

The VINE & BRANCHES

The Newsletter of WORKERS TOGETHER WITH HIM, inc.

Incorporated September 28, 1999

Charter 01552809-01

Post Office Box 4217 Brownsville, Texas, USA 78523-4217

Office Telephone (956) 574-9475

E-Mail: workerstogether@aol.com

Web Site: www.workerstogetherwithhim.org



Jesus said, "For without Me, ye can do nothing."

The goodness and blessing of our Lord be with you this holiday season and always, in the name of the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

It has been a busy but fruitful season since the last newsletter. In the three months that have transpired, I have had the joy of teaching a Weapons of our Warfare seminar in England; a special weekend seminar on the utterance gifts of the Spirit in Lansing, Michigan, and my "If Ye Do These Things, Ye Shall Never Fall" seminar in Wales. Final preparations have just been made for a Weapons of our Warfare class here in Brownsville that will start right after Christmas.

The Weapons of our Warfare seminar in England was a great time of learning and deliverance for all who took part. As Jesus said, "*The truth shall make you free*" (Jn 8:32). God desires that we all be liberated from the powers of darkness so that we are free to serve Him. "*Let my people go, that they may serve Me*" (Exo.10:3). Many thanks to the students, and especially to Tony Kandial and Michael Mantock for their assistance in this event.

While in England, I had the honor of ordaining Mr. Jerome Lucas to the Christian ministry. For many years, (since long before I met him) Jerome has proven himself faithful to God and in the service of His people, and I consider it an honor to know and work with him. I was particularly moved to see the number of people who attended this special event, some traveling from miles away to join their brother on his special day.

Also while in London, I had the joy of presenting the newborn son of Estefan and Litsa Charles in dedication to the Lord. God bless you and all your family.

I was home in Brownsville for only a few days before flying off to Lansing, Michigan for a special weekend seminar on the utterance gifts of the Spirit. This event was sponsored by my friends, Jim and Shawnee Vickery. Many of the students received the gift of tongues, the gift of the interpretation of tongues and the gift of prophecy for the first time, while the others received further instruction in their proper and Biblical use. I had a fantastic time in Michigan and I pray the Lord will grant me the grace to return.

Nelly and I have only recently returned from Wales where I presented my two-day seminar, If Ye Do These Things, Ye Shall Never Fall. This event was organized by Carl and Vivienne Roberts. Thanks so much for all your love and hospitality.

I think that much of the reason these events continue to be so successful is because of the time of fellowship they provide. It is refreshing to be fed the Bread of Life, the good Word of the Lord. But so much more is accomplished than what comes forth from the pulpit. The "*assembling of ourselves together*" is vital for our spiritual well being as well, as the Word of the Lord makes clear:

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 10:25)

At all these events, we had a marvelous time being together in the Word, praying together and singing songs of joy and thanksgiving.

I will be presenting "If Ye Do These Things, Ye Shall Never Fall" on February 9-10, 2002 in Almere Haven, Netherlands, sponsored by Mary Calpin. Space is limited, so if you plan to attend, please contact Mary.calpin@mcf.nl (Calpin, Mary).

I'd like to thank all of you who were so generous in your support of Workers Together With Him in 2001. I pray that now and "when the roll is called up yonder," you will see a bountiful return on your investment. I will be sending out receipts of donation to you in early 2002.

We can have high hopes and rich expectations for the coming year as we remain faithful in our service to our Heavenly Father and His Son Jesus Christ. On behalf of my wife and family, I send to you our best wishes for a wonderfully Merry Christmas and a very happy and prosperous New Year. And enjoy the newsletter!

In the service of His Majesty, the King of kings,

Rev. Tim Sullivan



**All Men Should Honour the Son,
even as they Honour the Father**

by Rev. Tim Sullivan

The “official” Christmas season is known as Christmastide or the Twelve Days of Christmas (hence the famous song) and lasts from December 24, Christmas Eve, to January 5, the eve of Epiphany. The Epiphany is traditionally observed on January 6, to celebrate “the manifestation of the divine nature of Jesus to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi”(as stated in the American Heritage Dictionary).

I confess I get a real thrill out of the Christmas season with it’s twinkling lights, the tinsel and the smell of cut pine that is so much a part of this season. I love to sing Christmas hymns, and I can still get a little teary-eyed seeing a production of Charles Dickens’s wonderful morality play of repentance, “A Christmas Carol.” I love to see the joy on my children’s face as they tear into their gaily-wrapped presents. (And who am I kidding? I don’t mind tearing into a few myself!)

But for too many, the joys of this season have been stolen away. When they think of Christmas, they think of mass merchandising. They echo the sentiments of old Mr. Scrooge: “*Merry Christmas? Out upon Merry Christmas! What’s Christmas-time but a time for paying bills without money; a time for finding yourself a year older, and not an hour richer? If I could work my will, every idiot who goes about with ‘Merry Christmas’ on his lips should be boiled with his own pudding, and buried with a stake of holly through his heart!*”

Please, don’t misunderstand me. Concerning the celebration of Christmas, I am persuaded that the sentiments expressed by Paul are the most Christian:

One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it.
(Romans 14:5-6a)

Therefore, at the risk of sounding the schoolboy, I will subtitle this article, “What Christmas Means to Me.” Frankly, I marvel at Christmas. I believe God Almighty uses this season to bring the world face-to-face with the birth of His Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. No one who has ever heard of Christmas can say they have not heard of Christ. They are without excuse.

Most scholars dismiss the notion that Christ was born on December 25, 1 AD. I can’t help but be amused, however, by the wide spectrum of dates proposed by equally learned men as the true day of our Lord’s birth. In the final analysis, it is not important what day or year Jesus was born. The important fact is that He *was* born. On that joyful day, there was celebration indeed.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. (Luke 2:13-14)

Christmastime is a special time to remember the birth of the Savior Jesus Christ. But whether we choose to regard the day or not, we are to honor the Lord Jesus Christ. To honor the Son is to honor the Father.

That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.
(John 5:23)

True Christianity is the worship, the *adoration*, of the Son of God. Again we read the words of Jesus: “*He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.*” What does this say about those who claim to love God but deny that Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world? Many people think their eternity is secure because they believe in God. But the doors to eternity do not swing open to all who believe in a Supreme Being. Eternal life is given those who believe on God’s Son.

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (John 3:17-18)

The words of Jesus speak directly to the matter.

It is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: (John 8:54b-55a)

Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. (John 8:19b)

One will never know the Father until he first knows the Son.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: (John 14:6-7a)

It is the spirit of antichrist that compels men to deny Jesus Christ His rightful honor as the Son of God.

Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.
(1 John 2:22)

To seek to honor the Father without honoring the Son is hypocrisy.

He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. (Mark 7:6)

It is remarkable, a real epiphany of truth. "*All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.*"

The sad truth is, I used to be *afraid* of worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ. To begin with, I was unclear about what it even *meant* to worship. (According to Webster's 1828 Dictionary, to worship is "to adore; to pay divine honors to; to reverence with supreme respect and veneration.") I was taught that worship of the Son was tantamount to idolatry; that worship was for God the Father only. I was in such a confused state, I was afraid even to *speak* to my Lord!

The terrible irony is, of course, that to make anything *other* than Christ the center of your worship is the *surest* path to idolatry. No teacher, no organization, no doctrine must be allowed to usurp the centrality of Christ in your life. Our allegiance is to Him. We are *Christians*... followers of Christ.

By the testimony of the Scriptures, Christ is *equal* with God because God is His Father.

Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (Phil 2:6)

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. (John 5:18)

Only one *equal* with God could sit at His right hand. Therefore, the Son is due the *same* worship, the same honor, the same reverence as the Father. "*All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.*"

Then they [*Peter and the disciples*] that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God. (Matthew 14:33)

Remember, Jesus didn't say, "I show you the way." He said, "I AM the way." He didn't say, "I teach you the truth." He said, "I AM the truth." And He didn't say, "I give you life." He said, "I AM the life." Jesus is the "bread of life" (Jn. 6:35). He is the "light of the world" (Jn. 8:12). He is the "door of the sheep" and the "good shepherd" (Jn. 10:7&11). He is the "resurrection and the life" and the "true vine" (Jn. 11:25 & 15:1). Jesus is the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending" (Rev. 1:8), the "first and the last" (Rev. 1:17). He is the "bright and morning star" (Rev. 22:16). And He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords.

His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were

many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. (Revelations 19:12-16).

Jesus Christ is God *made manifest* in the flesh.

And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

(1 Timothy 3:16)

He is the *Word* of God made flesh.

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

And God has magnified His *Word* above all His name.

I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.

(Psalm 138:2)

Yes, Jesus came to earth "*found in fashion as a man.*"

He humbled Himself even unto death. But God has exalted that same Jesus and given a name that is above every name... *even His Own!*

It seems that some people find it more important to emphasize the manhood of Jesus rather than His divinity. They perceive Him in His humiliation rather than in His glory. Do they not realize that in so doing they denigrate the One Whom God has not only exalted, but *highly* exalted?

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Phil. 2:9-11)

It is to the glory of God that His Son is exalted. "*All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.*" Let us lay aside, if but for a moment, the controversial issues surrounding the Christmas season and let us stand together in the great mystery of godliness that is *without* controversy. Let us sing out in one heart and mind the message of the glorious Christmas anthem, "O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord!"

It is with great pleasure that I present you with this magnificent work of poetry, composed by my eldest sister:



Luke 2:19

**But Mary kept all these things
and pondered them in her heart.**



With shimmering iridescence of sunlit splendor,
The holy presence hailed you, O Virgin girl.
What celestial brightening...
What lightness filling
The waiting, simple vessel of your faith.

And then the room again... made small and empty,
And, Mary, you alone left to explain
To father, mother, to espoused Joseph,
The archangelic voice, the Savior King.

How treacherous long the journey in our world
translated
From promise to fulfillment, from hope to doubt,
From Nazareth's vision to Bethlehem's crowded
innyards,
From glimmering Gabriel to a dusty donkey's plod.

A pillow so sweet, never a bed more welcomed
Than straw fresh strewn upon the stable floor,
But moaning midst the cattles' murmured lowing,
What thoughts, Mary, what ponderings in your
heart?

Unfolding 'neath the darkened gloaming rafters
The cosmic drama in seclusion plays.

To this moment the universe has labored.
This moment, Mary, gathers tight your pain.

Till now your babe has been alone your keeping,
Until now your womb, a sheltering.
Then violence sudden tears from you... a cry...
And ransoms us – a world – for a King.

Fondle now His fingers tightly clasping,
Wonder now at feet so small and frail.
Cherish, Mary, spared for now of knowing,
His Hands... His Feet... His Suffering... the nails.

Swaddle His tiny body in snowy linen,
With simple shepherds adoration sing.
In winding sheets you will someday wrap Him
With frankincense, myrrh, the gift from kings to
King.

Ponder, Mary, the babe you hold so closely,
Emmanuel – God with us – Savior mine and
yours.
And His Vast Soul so weakly tabernacled
Like desert wind will swell and burst tent walls.

By Jonny Sullivan Price

© 1995: Jonny Sullivan Price
jprice21@columbus.rr.com



The Faith of Mary

by Steve Monahan

In the first chapter of the gospel of Luke, we read of a visitation by the angel Gabriel to a young virgin named Mary who was betrothed to a man named Joseph.

And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. (Luke 1:26-27)

The angel told her that she was "blessed among women" and that she would conceive and bear a son, whom she was to name Jesus, and who would ascend to the throne of his ancestor, King David.

And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (Luke 1:28-32)

Now maybe the enormity of what she'd been told didn't hit her right away; maybe it did. In any case, the scriptures tell us of only one question she asked.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? (Luke 1:34)

Let's consider some things she didn't ask, which you or I might have asked: Son of the Highest? Throne of David? Are you kidding? Yeah, my lineage runs through the succession of the kings of Judah, but have you noticed that I live in working-class Nazareth? Not exactly high society, you know!

Or perhaps on a more immediate, "practical" note: Pregnant?? Now??!! What's my *mama* going to say??!! Or Joseph or the whole town??!! DO YOU REALIZE I COULD BE STONED???. Are you NUTS??

It is possible, I suppose, that those questions didn't even come up in Mary's mind, but humanly speaking, these were problems to deal with. Anyway, the angel answered her question, saying that she would conceive by

the power of the Holy Spirit and give birth to the Son of God. And by the way Mary, he told her, your supposedly barren cousin Elizabeth is in her sixth month of pregnancy. God can do anything.

Mary says okay, so be it as you said. The angel leaves, then *she* leaves... in a big hurry for the Judean hills. Did she tell her mama or Joseph what had happened? I personally doubt it. But for now let's go on.

Mary arrived at Elisabeth's house...

And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women... (Luke 1:41-42a)

Elisabeth's voice rang out with the same truth Gabriel had uttered: "Blessed art thou among women!" She then continued:

...and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?...For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. (Luke 1:42b-43, 45)

Wow! First God sent word by an angel, then prophecy out of the mouth of Elisabeth to reassure Mary that she was in the center of God's will. (He does much the same for us, you know.) Then Mary answered, pouring out the abundance of her heart of faith, finishing with:

He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever. (Luke 1:54-55)

Seems to me that by these sayings, Mary reveals the fundamental fact that allowed her to step into her role as mother of the Messiah, in spite of the personal adversity it was surely going to cost her. She was living her life in rapt anticipation of the fulfillment of God's age-old promise to send His seed, the Savior among men. It wasn't just a doctrine she believed. Mary was WAITING! Therefore, when the announcement came, she joyously took the job – along with all the problems that went with it.

This is the faith of Mary, an example to us all. Mary believed God, pure and simple. At the moment of truth, faced with a decision that would inalterable change her life, she unhesitatingly declared, "Be it unto me according to thy word!"

Christian!! Are you waiting for the Lord to come? For the "Rapture"? Well? Is there any rapture in your heart now that will move you to rise to God's calling, a calling that may at times be uncomfortable or inconvenient? Fill your heart with the joy of His coming, and you too will find yourself able to say to the Lord, "Be it unto *me* according to thy word."



To Everything There Is A Season

by Rev. Todd Pikel

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Ecc. 3:1). These words, though written long ago, ring loud and true yet today. More and more I see this mortal life as a series of seasons or time frames of reference. Indeed, there is “a time to every purpose under the heaven.” Even now, as we fully enter the holiday season, we know that it too will pass and time will continue its relentless march toward its date with destiny, when time will be no more.

Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

(1 Corinthians 15:24-28)

Until God is “all in all,” there will be a season for everything. Until God is “all in all,” there will be a time for every purpose under the heaven, “according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Eph. 3:11).

What about death, one asks? As we read above, death is the *last* enemy that will be destroyed. What is truly amazing is “that *through death*, He might destroy him that had the power of death” (Heb. 2:14b). Death, the Scriptures say, is “swallowed up in victory.”

Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (1 Corinthians 15:51-54)

This “swallowing up” takes place in our *resurrection*. Of course *our* resurrection is dependent upon the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the

firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

(1 Corinthians 15:20-24)

Jesus Christ couldn’t have been raised, if He hadn’t first died.

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

(1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

Our Lord could not have died, if he wasn’t first *born*.

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

(Luke 2: 9-11)

Of course, He couldn’t have been born, if He hadn’t first been conceived.

And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (Luke 1:30-33)

Our Lord’s birth was indeed at “a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Eccl. 3:1b). As we remember and celebrate our Lord’s birth during this season let us be mindful of the ultimate victory we have in Him who “hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel” (2 Tim 1:9b).

But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

(1 Corinthians 15:57-58)

Let us be thankful for *all* the seasons we pass along the way to when time shall be no more and we enter the final, eternal season of our manifest immortality in Christ. Until then, however, let us be comforted knowing that “to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven” (Eccl. 3:1).



Has God Forgotten To Be Gracious?

by Rev. Dimitris Pelidis

There comes a time in life when calamity strikes and troubles torments our soul to the point of despair. These are trying times, times when “we are pressed out of measure above strength, insomuch that we despair even of life” (2 Corinthians 1:8). The days are swift and cheerless and the nights long and agonizing. For anyone who has been or is actually going through such travail he will surely identify with what follows.

In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted. I remembered God, and was troubled: I complained, and my spirit was overwhelmed. Selah. Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so troubled that I cannot speak. (Psalm 77:2-4)

Apparently, it is a state of severe anguish and depression when our soul refuses to be comforted and our spirit is overwhelmed. Restlessness keeps our eyes open and grief seals our mouth. We reflect on the good old days and wonder why life has turned out so bitter and we pour out one question after another.

Will the Lord cast off for ever? and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever? doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies? Selah. (Psalm 77:7-9).

This is a critical time because it is then that our faith in God is tested. Will we turn away from Him or turn to Him for help in time of need? Which way shall we go?

Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. (Psalm 73:25-26).

After questioning God’s grace, the Psalmist eventually comes to his right mind and recognizes that this is his infirmity, his weakness, not God’s.

And I said, This is my infirmity: (Psalm 77:10a).

Nevertheless, man’s infirmity is God’s opportunity to help us overcome. The Lord has made it His business to be strong on our behalf. He fights our battles and always causes us to triumph in Christ (1 Cor. 2:14). All great heroes of faith were made strong through weakness. Not one person achieved greatness through his own power or ability. They were all without exception weak in themselves but grew strong in the Lord and the power of His might.

The great apostle Paul went so far as to boast in his infir-

mities because in his hour of trouble the Lord encouraged him by saying:

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ’s sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong. (2 Corin. 12:9-10).

Peter, the great fisherman was familiar with tests. He knew that the fiery trial of our faith is normal and should not be seen as something strange but should be expected and that with joy.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ’s sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. (1 Peter 4:12-13).

When coming to mental and physical pain, no man has ever suffered more than our Lord Jesus Christ! The Bible depicts Him as “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” (Isa. 53:3). Yet, the reason why He went to the cursed cross was for the joy of our salvation. He saw the day when the Spirit of God would rest upon us and the joy of it far outweighed the terrible torture and shame He suffered to accomplish it.

Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds. (Hebrews 12:2-3).

Brothers and sisters, let us look unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith and consider Him so that we don’t get tired and discouraged. Let us be strong and very courageous for the time of Christ’s glorious reappearance is very close. Then will our affliction be viewed in its true dimensions.

For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; (2 Corinthians 4:17).

For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. (Psalm 30:5).

What a comfort to know that “the night is far spent, the day is at hand” (Rom. 13:12). The dawn of Christ’s glorious day is cracking and joy comes in the morning.

Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his

sight. Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the LORD: his going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain unto the earth. (Hosea 6:1-3).

His return is prepared as the morning! Just as surely as the sun will come out tomorrow morning and herald the beginning of a new day so will Christ come as the former and latter rain unto the earth. The question is when we shall know this. And the answer is only if we follow on to know the Lord.

We might not always understand why bad things come our way and why life seems so harsh and unfair at times but let us continue to know the Lord. Now is the time of revival! Following that, the daybreak of the third glorious day when our Lord returns and raises us up. Praise God He is coming back! Cheer up for we will see Him in very soon!

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh... Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy. (James 5:7-8,10-11).

We know from the story of Job that as he patiently waited on the Lord, God blessed his latter end more than his beginning. So will it be with all those who patiently wait upon the Lord.

In the time of trouble we pray for a miracle to happen and our God being a miracle working God will answer prayers of faith. However, we might not have realized the marvelous miracle that God is already performing quietly within us. Namely, the miracle of comforting us in the hour of tribulation. He gives us the strength and courage to endure and overcome.

Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble... (2 Corinthians 1:3-4a).

Has God forgotten to be gracious? Our God is the God of all grace and the Father of mercies. The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy. His compassions fail not. They are new every morning. Don't you forget it, will you?

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. (1 Peter 5:10)



The Contented Christian Life

by Rev. Evan Pyle

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. (Philippians 4:11)

Contentedness and thankfulness, to a large degree, are taught in the school of hardship and need. I'm reminded of an old acquaintance who grew up in a large family of, I believe, nine children. They lived in a modest house with only one bathroom. As an adult, I found Dave to be one of the most content and thankful people I have ever known. His modest frame home he shared with his wife and two children was like a mansion to him.

When I think back to the roots of our Thanksgiving holiday celebrated in North America, trials far more severe than cramped quarters were the soil from which this holiday originated. Over half their fledgling settlement perished during that awful winter of 1620-21. Yet, despite the sadness and trouble, these pilgrims gathered with their Indian friends to give sincere thanks to God for their lives and the meager harvest they reaped.

It merits our consideration whether our concept of what is happiness and what constitutes God's blessing and "doing well" may well be colored by false hopes, unrealistic and unscriptural standards, and an unspiritual focus. Does prospering materially occupy a high place on our "blessing chart"? Does battling sickness mean we have fallen out of blessing? Does having troubles mean that we somehow don't measure up? A scriptural perception of what constitutes a happy and contented life is needful or we will always find ourselves discontented and unhappy. Seeing the true heart of God provides the cure to these ills.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:37-39)

Nothing can ever separate us from His love. That means in the darkest of circumstances I am still connected to and covered by his Love. Even our sins and personal failings cannot separate us from His love.

Yes, I understand the danger of being satisfied with less than God's will. As Joshua said, "Alas, O Lord God,

wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan!" (Joshua 7:7). I never want to get to the place where my sinful state is "good enough" in my own mind. Yet I cannot, nor will I ever be able to perfect myself before the Lord. I become the proverbial dog chasing his tail, a race nobody will ever win. This knowledge should drive me to the Cross, where I am cleansed by His perfect blood. This is where I yield my sinful self to Jesus' righteousness so that He can live and love through me. There I am content to dwell safely. There is where I know I have acceptance with God.

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. (Ephesians 1:6)

When I know I am accepted in the Beloved (Christ), I no longer trudge the impossible path of making myself accepted before Him. I rest in His love and from Jesus' strength I move forward in His will, not in my own strength or power, but in His.

Paul often found himself in dire circumstances. He was hounded by evil people who opposed him at every turn and actively sought his death. Paul even listed some of his trials and tribulations in Corinthians.

Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; (2 Corinthians 11:23-26)

Yet through all this Paul had learned the secret of living a content and thankful life.

Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. (Philippians 4:11)

Paul's secret to a content and happy life is revealed in the next chapter of 2 Corinthians. Here Paul is discussing his problems with the Lord and even besought Him three times that these trials may be taken away. God's answer is the secret Paul learned and that we must learn:

And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

In troubled times, times of fear and uncertainty, times

of trials and tribulations, our Father cries out to us, "My Grace is sufficient for thee!" When we are weak and run to God and seek His grace, He becomes our secret to a contented Christian life. It is then we become strong...in Him. We know He is always enough and sufficient for our need. In our time of need, we who are heavy laden come to Jesus and He gives us rest. Praise be to the Lord!

The greater the hardship, the more precious the blessings of true riches become.

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. (1 Timothy 6:6)

True, we can carry none of goods with us to the other side. But we can glory in our afflictions when we know they go toward gaining the crown of life.

Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. (2 Timothy 4:8)

True thanksgiving, happiness and contentment bring the material and natural under control of the spiritual and immutable. It is my prayer that we, brothers and sisters, will continue to seek God and his daily grace until Christ truly becomes for us our "all in all."

...but Christ is all, and in all. (Colossians 3:11b)



Thinking About Thinking

by Jerelyn Pearson

Thinking is something we do all the time. Thoughts constantly fill our heads. Have you ever tried *not* to think? Try it. At best you end up thinking about "not thinking." Allowed to run wild, our thoughts can take us down many roads. Since thinking is such an ever-present factor in our lives, it might be profitable to give it some thought.

God's Word offers instruction regarding our thinking and provides insight into His thought as well.

Some of our thinking time is spent trying to "find out" information.

Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek it out, yet he shall not find it; yea further; though a wise man think to know it, yet shall he not be able to find it. (Eccl 8:17)

And if any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know.

(1 Corinthians 8:2)

It is more important to love God and know him and be known of Him.

But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

(1 Corinthians 8:3)

Some of our thinking time is spent thinking about ourselves.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; (Romans 12:3a)

Instead of thinking highly of ourselves, we should think soberly.

...but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. (Romans 12:3b)

Some of our thinking time is spent worrying about our needs.

Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? (Matthew 6:25)

God knows our needs. We need only to seek Him.

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matthew 6:31-33)

Some of our thinking time is spent thinking about others.

And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us not to think of men above that which is written, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another. (1 Corinthians 4:6)

The Word of God is more important than the person who presents it.

For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it? (1 Corinthians 4:7)

Some of our thinking time is spent judging others.

Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: (1 Corinthians 4:5a)

Suspending judgment brings a blessing.

...and then shall every man have praise of God.

(1 Corinthians 4:5b)

Some of our thinking time is spent worrying about the future.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. (Matthew 6:34)

Some of our thinking time is spent imagining scenarios and planning how we would respond in some hypothetical situation.

And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and unto magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say: For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say. (Luke 12:11-12)

Some of our thinking time is spent considering things over which we have no control.

Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. (1 Peter 4:12-13)

Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. (Matthew 24:44)

Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not. (Luke 12:40)

And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? (Luke 12:25-26)

Instead, seek the kingdom of God. This is pleasing to Him.

But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. (Luke 12:31-32)

That we think is unavoidable. What we think is crucial. We grow in maturity in our thinking.

When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. (1 Corinthians 13:11)

Our thoughts are subject to obedience.

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) 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 10:3-5)

How can we bring our thoughts into obedience?

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God;

Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

(2 Corinthians 3:5-6)

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, (Ephesians 3:20)

How important is it to think about God?

Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. (Malachi 3:16-17)

Finally, what does God think about us?

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. (Jer. 29:11-13)



Oh Victory in Jesus!

A Testimony of Deliverance

I took the seminar "Weapons of our Warfare" for the first time last year in Switzerland. The time in Aeschiried, where the seminar took place, was not only very special for me but it was a starting point of a great change in my life.

I remember very well when I first heard Tim teaching on Saturday morning at 9:00 a.m. in Aeschiried. Although I still had some doubts in my mind concerning the authenticity of the whole seminar I said to myself: "Oh wow, this is a real nice guy, I can't believe it! It really must be very satisfying and great privilege just to wear his suitcase!" But a few hours later my enthusiasm that was there at the beginning gave way to a kind of heavy worrying although the simplicity of the teaching was absolutely convincing. At the end of the first day I realized that there were some obstacles that would hinder me to continue the class. On the one hand I was more and more sure that the things I have heard were true but on the other hand I felt very strongly that the whole teaching was a too big

challenge for me to deal with.

On the morning of the second day I came to the conclusion that I needed the help and the support of my heavenly Father in this almost hopeless matter. So I prayed for deliverance in order to be able to continue the course. The answer to my prayer came a few hours later after lunch. At that time I was talking to a very nice couple from the States who were, as I had decided the day before, my "personal advisers." After having urgently ask one of them why people can't get rid of some wrong religious beliefs, she answered me after some long and insignificant digressions that there existed "binding spirits" which hinder people to overcome the influence of "religious authorities."

I can't almost describe what happened after having heard these words! When I was still thinking about the impact of these words on my life, I felt an almost physical perceptible kind of love from her heart to my heart. I saw also a second wave of love from the heart of her husband as a further supply which first went to her heart until it finally reached my heart in a way that it carried out a sort of a change in me. The joy that followed was as if I was 5 years old standing before a wonderful decorated Christmas tree and a huge amount of presents. Indeed the whole world changed for a few minutes into paradise!

Half an hour later I met Tim when he was just leaving his hotel room for the afternoon lesson. As I was still very excited I explained him heavy-handed and with only a few words what had happened and I closed my attempt with the exclamation: I AM FREE now! But as it seemed he at once understood perfectly the whole situation and said with great joy and enthusiasm: "Praise the LORD!"

Now as I am looking back to that time the deliverance I experienced becomes more and more meaningful to me and I can only say with relief and joy in my heart: Praise the LORD!

George Straub
Zug, Switzerland

The VINE & BRANCHES is distributed free of charge, financed by donations received by Workers Together With Him. Please let us know if you to be added or deleted from our mailing list. Written contributions are encouraged and may be submitted to our office for publication upon approval. We reserve the right to make editorial changes as needed, but without changing the original intent of the author.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

(Isaiah 9:6)

May the true meaning of Christmas bring you joy and peace throughout the New Year!



will be presented in Brownsville, Texas from December 27, 2001 to January 2, 2002 at the home office of Workers Together With Him.

**If Ye Do These Things,
Ye Shall Never Fall**

will be presented in Almere Haven, Netherlands
February 9-10, 2002.

*For additional information,
or to request a class in your area,
please write or call our office.*

Workers Together With Him

P.O. Box 4217
Brownsville, Texas USA 78523-4217
Phone/Fax: 956-574-9475 e-mail: workerstogether@aol.com
Visit our web site at www.workerstogetherwithhim.org

Workers Together With Him is an international Christian ministry dedicated to the furtherance of the message of Salvation and the education of Christians to the end that they be a living testimony of God's love, power and glory. Teachings are distributed via congregational meetings, seminars and various publications. This ministry is financed entirely by the tithes and offerings of its supporters.

All Scripture referenced in this publication is from the Authorized King James Version of the Bible, as quoted in Power BibleCD, Copyright 2000 by Online Publishing, Inc. 127 N. Matteson Street PO Box 21, Bronson, MI 49028 bible@mail.com.