

**LORD OF ALL**

By Bill McFarland

Maybe you have heard the story about the farmer who told the preacher he had "got religion." The preacher replied, "That's fine, but are you sure you're going to put aside all sin?" "Yes sir," said the farmer, "I'm through with sin!" And are you going to pay up all your debts?" asked the preacher. "Now wait a minute," said the farmer, "You ain't talking religion, you're talking business."

It is unfortunate that we so often, like this man, want to suppose that we can be Christians only in part of our lives. Many seem to think that we can have Christ in our "spiritual" lives while we reserve the right to please ourselves in "secular" things. Scripture makes no such distinction.

A Christian is to follow Christ every day. Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23.) No days are left out in this matter of following

Christ.

A Christian is to honor Christ in everything. The Scripture says, "And whatsoever you do, in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." (Colossians 3:17.) No conversations nor actions are exempt from the claim of Christ.

A Christian is to live for Christ with all his being. The apostle wrote, "I beseech you brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." (Romans 12:1.) There is no part of our lives which we should not see as belonging to God.

If Christ is Lord, there can be no corners of life where His lordship is not recognized. One's loyalty to Christ will make a difference in his home, his work, his business, his play and his talk. A Christian is to mean it when he sings, "All to Jesus I surrender, all to

Him I freely give. I will ever love and trust Him, in His presence daily live."

— Springfield, MO

"Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

(Philippians 3:13,14.)

**CHANGE AND CONTENTMENT**

By Luke Bower

There is an old story of a king who ruled in a very rich nation. One day he set out to see all the land over which he ruled. After his journey, his feet hurt from the rocky roads on which he had traveled. Determined to do something about it, he ordered all the roads in his kingdom covered with leather, so his feet would not have to walk all the rocky roads. This would cost a fortune and, most likely - because of having to butcher so many cows for the leather - cause the people of his kingdom to starve. However, the king was determined to do something about his hurting feet.

Finally, one of the king's servants got over his fear of upsetting the king and offered a suggestion. "Instead of covering every road in the country with leather, why don't you just get a small amount of leather and strap it to your feet?" The King was surprised at his servant's boldness, but later decided to

fashion a "shoe" for himself.

The deeper moral of this story is this: in order to make this world a happier, better place to live, change yourself - your heart and understanding - not the world.

In Philippians 4:12-13, we read that Paul learned to be content in any situation he found himself in. He wrote, "I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all things through Him who gives me strength."

As Christians, we should learn not to get too upset and down about the circumstances life has thrown our way. Instead, we should learn about the strength, understanding, and peace we are offered in Christ Jesus.

You can't always change the things that happen to you, but you can

change what you do with those things.

— Abilene, TX

"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." (Matthew 6:31-34.) "For we brought nothing into this world and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content." (1 Timothy 6:7,8.)

**Old Paths**

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*"ask for the old paths" (Jer. 6:16)***LESSONS TO PASS ON TO YOUR CHILDREN**

By Danny Tunnell

When children reach their teen years, they begin to think more independently. They may not want to follow their parents' rules or to listen to advice. That's all part of growing up. But when the parents' counsel is compatible with the Bible, it needs to be heeded.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6.) "Children obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor your father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth. And you fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Ephesians 6:1-4.) "A wise son hears his father's instruction: but a scorner hears not rebuke." (Proverbs 13:1.)

Many young people come to the realization that the older they get, the smarter their parents seem to become! This is especially true if the parents do not have two sides; in other words, if they practice what they preach.

What are some valuable lessons godly parents may want to impart to their children?

- (1) The lesson of faith and how you should never waver in your trust in God and should always let His word be your foundation. (Romans 10:17.)
- (2) When you borrow something, always return it in better condition than when you got it. That's part of the Golden Rule. (Matthew 7:12.)
- (3) Never put pressure on people. They are not your source. God is your source. (James 1:17.)
- (4) Don't seek revenge. Wait on the Lord, He will deliver you. (Isaiah 40:31; Romans 12:19-21.)
- (5) Be careful about borrowing money. It is not a sin, but it may not be God's best for you, and it can cause you to become a servant to the lender. (Proverbs 22:7.)
- (6) Never make rash, knee-jerk decisions when the pressure is on. Relax and roll the care of it on the Lord. (1 Peter 5:7.)
- (7) Respect law enforcement officers and the military. (Romans 13:1-4.)
- (8) Pray for the president and all our leaders - on all levels. (1 Timothy 2:1-4.)
- (9) Don't give heed to what people say about you - good or bad. Don't listen to the bad stuff because you might start believing it. Don't listen to the good stuff because you might start believing it. (Acts 5:29.)
- (10) Always tell the truth. There are no white lies. (Colossians 3:9.)
- (11) Keep your word even to your own hurt. (Psalm 15:4.)
- (12) Always believe the best of people. (1 Peter 4:8; Philippians 4:8.)
- (13) Do what is right, even when no one is watching. (Proverbs 15:3; Matthew 6:6,18.)
- (14) Love people. It is not your job to judge people harshly, ignoring your own sins while pointing out the sins of others. (Luke 6:41-42.)

This list is not exhaustive. It only serves as a sample of some valuable lessons to pass on to our children.

— Miami, OK

**WHEN YOU DIE**

By Cecil Burch

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalm 116:15.) "It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Hebrews 9:27.)

Death is a subject that most of us try to avoid, but with the passing of time we must recognize its reality. Recently a group of nine year olds was giving their opinions of death. In their sweet innocence they discussed this unpleasant subject. One said, "Maybe I'll die someday, but I hope I don't die on my birthday because it's no fun to celebrate your birthday if you are dead." Another said, "When you die you don't have to do your homework in heaven, unless your teacher is there too." One little boy said, "When you die, they bury you in the ground and your soul goes to heaven; but your body can't go to heaven because it's too crowded up there already." A little girl said, "Only good people go to heaven. The other people go to a place where it is hot all the time, like in Florida." We all know that death is no laughing matter, but it is refreshing to listen to our little ones as they develop their minds and begin to explore the world around them.

It makes no difference how much you try to get ready for death, the ugly shock is always there. The funeral homes and cemeteries are places of sorrow and tears. There is a feeling of hopelessness that pervades the living. Even the apostle Paul referred to death as having a "sting." "The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Corinthians 15:56,57.) It is no wonder then that the Psalmist said long ago that, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

When the apostle Paul was in prison in Rome and realizing that death could be near, he wrote to the Christians at Philippi saying, "For me to live is Christ and to die is gain." (Philippians 1:21.) Death no longer held a horrible chain around his neck; he was free from sin which brings death and he knew that "in Christ" he was the recipient of eternal life by the grace of God. It is God's free gift to those in Christ. (Romans 6:23.) When a child of God nears death the words of Ecclesiastes 7:1 become real in his life: "The day of man's death is better than the day of his birth; it is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting." Why? Because the Christian does not go to a funeral but to a victory service.

— Amarillo, TX



## NAKED AND AFRAID

By Joe Slater

This article has nothing to do with the (un) reality show by the same title. I've never watched it and hope you haven't either! But I figured the name might get your attention

At the creation, Adam and Eve "were both naked . . . and were not ashamed." (Genesis 2:25.) God created our bodies, and they are good. Marital intimacy is pure and holy. Nakedness became shameful only after Adam and Eve sinned. As if they could hide themselves from God, they made fig-leaf garments and hid among the trees in Eden. (3:7-8.) "Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, 'Where are you?' So he said, 'I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.'" (3:9.)

Naked and afraid! Such is the result of sin.

The smug, self-satisfied brethren at Laodicea had fine clothes, but their souls were naked. They neither knew it nor had the good sense to be ashamed. Jesus rebuked them: "Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' – and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked – I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich, and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed." (Revelation 3:17-18.)

Public nakedness is shameful, worldly objections to the contrary notwithstanding. Let God's people resist the temptation to conform to an ungodly culture! But let us also realize that Scripture uses nakedness to illustrate the shamefulness of all sin. "Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame." (Revelation 16:15.)

Don't be naked and afraid!

— Justin, TX.

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

## EDITORIAL . . .

### HONESTY, STILL THE BEST POLICY

By Dalton Key

A caring math teacher, seasoned by years of real-life classroom experience, always made a little speech before handing out his tests. He would look seriously at the students and say, "I'm giving two tests today - one in mathematics and the other in honesty. I hope you pass both of them. But if you can pass only one, be sure it's the test in honesty. There are a lot of good men and women who don't know anything about algebra or trigonometry, but there are no good people who are not honest."

What a sad commentary on our times that the word "honesty" is most often prefaced with the adjective "old fashioned." While honesty is still - as always - "the best policy," it appears lately to be a policy more admired (from a safe distance) than required.

When Dad lies about where he's been, Mom hides the truth of who she's been talking with, and the kids, when caught red-handed with their hands in the cookie jar blurt out "we didn't do it," and when such subterfuge is considered by all parties as completely normal, something has gone wrong with society. When truth is jettisoned from family life, what hope is there for the world? "Truth in advertising?" Forget about it. "Honesty in politics?" You've got to be kidding. "Lying to get into a prestigious university?" Why not?

Does anyone feel the need to tell the truth anymore?

We've become masters at rebranding. We speak of white lies, half-truths, and clever spinning of the truth, but we might as well call things what they are. A lie is a lie, period. Whether we cheat on a tax return, perjure ourselves before a Grand Jury, or purposely deceive our spouse, a lie is a lie; and all dishonesty is inherently, undeniably wrong. Read Revelation 21:8 as proof.

The liar imitates the devil, who "is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8:44.) The one who lies possesses a tongue which is "an abomination" to the Lord. (Proverbs 6:16,17.) The Bible reveals lying to be a loathsome, disgusting practice which runs completely counter to the nature and desires of the God Who made us. (Hebrews 6:18; Titus 1:2.)

Scripture instructs, "Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor.'" (Ephesians 4:25.)

Why? Because there are no good people who are not honest. Old-fashioned or not, this world could use a healthy dose of true Christ-like integrity. The world may blindly lie its way into the corner of oblivion, but disciples of Christ know - and practice - the truth: honesty is the best policy.

Let's go about living what we know.

(NOTICE and REMINDER: Old Paths Men's Retreat, September 19-21, on the site of Flint Hills Christian Camp just north of Sedan, Kansas. I hope to see many of you there!)



## HEAVEN'S REMEDY

By Bobby Key

There was rebellion in the camp. The way had been hard, and the people were discouraged. Complaining about food, water, and hardships of the journey now turned into speaking against their leader, Moses. In fact, it went further and turned into speaking against Almighty God.

Punishment was equally swift. Fiery serpents appeared among the people, and by their bites the Israelites began to die. "We have sinned," the nation cried. "Save us. Take away these snakes!" Their plea was presented to God by an interceding Moses, and a gracious God hearkened unto them. "Make a fiery serpent. And it shall come to pass that every one that is bitten, when he sees it, shall live."

Those who did as they were told, lived. (Numbers 21.)

More is embraced here than just a historical event. Christ says this is an analogy of the redemption of fallen man. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." (John 3:14,15.)

Sin is the deadly malady that has spread through the world. Wherever man is found, there sin is found also.

Like the venom from the snake, sin is deadly. Victims died from the venom. In a more awful way the victim of sin pays the penalty of death.

Remedy for both snake bite and sin are prescribed by the Lord. The Israelites could not heal themselves; neither can we! They escaped punishment just as we will, by heeding

heaven's instructions!

— Miami, OK

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned." (Mark 16:16.) "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:38.) "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16.) "There is also an antitype which now saves us - baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 3:21.)

## UNFAILING FAITH

By Hershel Dyer

Leighton Pullen, with reference to the church in the second century, makes this observation: "As soon as men and women belonged to the Christian Church because their parents and grandparents had been Christians, and not because they had themselves to make the first break with heathen life, some enfeeblement of the Christian life almost inevitably displayed itself in certain quarters of the church." (The Church of the Fathers, P. 57.)

Almost with unerring accuracy it comes to pass. One generation goes through the battle for the truth, the next takes the truth that has been won for granted, and by the third generation the truth is no longer prized. That enfeeblement by the third or fourth generation may be expected, but it should also be guarded against.

During the first half of the 19th century, the call for a religious reformation was heard far and wide in this land. The greatly divided protestant churches were asked along with the Roman and Eastern Catholic bodies to return to the church as it is set forth in the New Testament. The rapid

growth of this plea to go back to "the old paths" and walk therein met with hostility in many quarters. However, even many within clergy gave up their denominational names and offices and doctrines in favor of Bible truth. On the part of both clergy and the common people this required agonizing choices preceded by intensive Bible study. The price they paid to walk with God knows no computation by man.

A few generations removed from these pioneers of the faith, we are losing the zeal to retain the ground they so valiantly won. Although the defense of the faith against enemy attacks will always be necessary, the faith is simply its propagation, the constant preaching of the gospel to the lost.

Every soul-winner is a defender of the faith, for every soul that is won to Christ becomes a token that the apostolic faith lives on!

— Tulsa, OK

"But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from

childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 3:14,15.)

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