

CHRISTIAN WORKER

“We are workers together with Him...” (2 Corinthians 6:1)

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PETER’S WIFE’S MOTHER

Ronnie Scherffius

“**A**nd he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon’s house. And Simon’s wife’s mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her. And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.” (Luke 4:38-39)

Each of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, & Luke) records the occasion of Jesus healing Peter’s mother-in-law. A quick glance may leave one with the impression that the record is simply another example of God’s approval of Jesus by “miracles, wonders, and signs” (Acts 2:22). However, a closer and more diligent observation of the text provides spiritual lessons that serve to strengthen our faith.

First, consider the sickness. Matthew and Mark note simply that the woman was “sick of a fever.” (Matt. 8:14; Mark 1:30). Identifying her fever as “great,” Luke the physician, reveals a more severe nature to her illness. According to Hobart (The Medical Language of Luke), the ancient Greeks divided fevers into great and small. The wording of Luke indicates the fever was continuous, severe, and possibly even a recurring condition. The language of the physician also denotes a sense of urgency; her life hung in the balance. And Luke’s use of the word “besought” carries the sense of intreating or even begging for help, further emphasizing the severity of the situation. A fever is a common illness, but the severity of her fever needed to be addressed without hesitation.

A spiritual lesson to be drawn here is the parallel of physical sickness to sin. Just as sickness is common to the human population, even so, sin is common to all humanity (Rom. 3:23; 1 John 1:8; et al.). Additionally, how one becomes sick provides a parallel for us to consider. Causes

of sickness vary from low immunity, associations with others who are “contagious,” and a failure to take care of one’s health properly. Each of these has a spiritual parallel.

Temptation often comes when we are at weak points in our lives when our “spiritual immunity” is low. Satan’s temptations of Jesus provide an excellent example (Luke 4:1-2). Closely associating with those who live in sin is most certainly a means by which many have fallen from steadfast faithfulness. David instructed, “Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful” (Ps. 1:1). On no less than two occasions, Paul emphasized to the Corinthians how associations may corrupt: “Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (1 Cor. 5:6), and “Evil companionships corrupt good morals” (1 Cor. 15:33, ASV).

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PERSPECTIVE

Cody Westbrook

The Christian life is one of ultimate victory and yet it is not without its pains. We live in a wicked world full of difficulties which affect us in many ways. Be it economic uncertainty, wicked leadership, death and disease, the scorn of unbelievers, or any number of challenges which can easily produce fear, doubt, and uncertainty within us, we will struggle. And yet, as Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:8-9, “We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.” Everyone struggles, believer and unbeliever alike, but we must not sorrow as those who have no hope (1 Thess. 4:13) because our God equips us to overcome.

First Thessalonians 5:16-18 is a short but powerful passage. The Thessalonian saints knew what it was to endure great challenges (cf. Acts 17) and this epistle was written, in part, to encourage them to remain steadfast despite them. The letter concludes with a number of imperatives regarding Christian life and service. Within that list are three well known commands, “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” Together, these three imperatives paint a moving portrait of what the Christian life should be. As we struggle through the difficulties of life, we must not complain or allow ourselves to be overtaken by fear. Rather, we joyfully and prayerfully thank our Father in every circumstance.

Joy is a distinguishing characteristic of New Testament Christianity. Unlike those outside of Christ, Christians possess an abiding sense of contentment, satisfaction, and hope regardless of circumstance. Such a concept was foreign to the pagan world of the first century. The gods of paganism were seen as unpredictable and vindictive, and thus a general sense of despair and hopelessness hung over the populace like a dark cloud. Even in our modern world true joy is foreign to the carnal mind. But Christians rejoice because we have hope (Rom. 12:12). Because we believe we “rejoice with

joy inexpressible and full of glory” (1 Pet. 1:8). Even in difficult times we rejoice because of what we know to be true (cf. Jas. 1:2-4). Yet it is important to note that joy is a choice. Paul chose to rejoice in suffering (2 Cor. 6:10) and so too must we.

To “pray without ceasing” is to be devoted to and invested in prayer. Luke used similar terminology in Luke 18:1 when he wrote, “Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart.” We must “continue steadfastly in prayer” (Rom. 12:12) and “pray always” (Eph. 6:18). In the ancient world prayers were offered up to false gods as a way of influencing them to be kind and generous to the people. But when we approach our Father in prayer, we are granted entrance into the throne room for an audience before the one true and living God who loves us and desires to hear from us and bless us (1 Pet. 5:7). What greater motivation to pray could possibly be imagined? Why would we not want to pray as often as possible?

Thanksgiving is an essential component of Christian character. We are to give thanks in all things (Eph. 5:20). “And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Col. 3:17). Always, in every circumstance, we must give thanks, and not just for the good and easy things. It is a worldly mindset that only gives thanks when things are good. But the Christian gives thanks even in times of trial because he recognizes that there is value even in suffering! “And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose” (Rom. 8:28). Rain or shine, poverty or wealth, success or failure, whatever the circumstance, we know the end of the story—victory! Thus, live by faith and thank God for an opportunity to abound.

No one is exempt from the difficulties of life. “Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble” (Job 14:1). The sun shines and the rain falls on everyone (Matt. 5:45). What then is the difference between the

righteous and the unrighteous? In a word, perspective. How we view things, our perspective, determines our reaction. God's people have a heavenly perspective. We know the end of the story. An unbelieving world crumbles under intense pressure. They complain, retaliate, and worry. Christians, however, can endure even the most difficult of circumstances. Not because of ourselves, but because of our God. He wills that we be people of joy and thanksgiving, regularly approaching Him with our cares and desires.

wrought with problems. For example, the elders of Israel were unimpressed with the corrupt leadership that waited in the wings. Samuel's sons "took bribes and perverted justice" (1 Sam. 8:3). Second, Israel, as a nation, was not to be like the nations around them. On the contrary, they were supposed to function as light to the nations. They were to be a kingdom of priests to the gentiles (see Dt. 4:1-8). Third, they were rejecting God as their King.

CW

Samuel was vexed by the nation's request, but the Lord said, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being *king* over them" (1 Sam. 8:7, italicized for emphasis). What they received, in return, were kings: first Saul, then David, then Solomon. At the death of Solomon the nation divided, and the northern tribes, known as Israel, had their kings, and the southern tribes, known as Judah, had their kings. There were no righteous kings in Israel. There were only a handful of good kings in Judah.

The books of 1 & 2 Kings begin on a high note with Solomon on the throne. The fame of his wealth and wisdom reach the ears of the Queen of Sheba. Examples of his great wisdom are given—but, the books end with Zedekiah being led in chains to Babylon, but not before he sees his sons murdered and his eyes are plucked from his head.

How do we get from the splendor of Solomon's kingdom to Babylonian Captivity? The answer is, the kings. It was due to the corrupt leadership of the kings that Israel was ultimately led to captivity. God, the ideal King, ruled over all of creation, and in a special way over the nation of Israel. Israel rejected Him as king, so God gave them what they requested—to their own hurt. Israel's history under the kings illustrates what happens to a people reject God as their ruler, their King, and mere mortals reign in His stead.

Jeremiah lived to foretell, and to see, the demise of Jerusalem. His message was a sad one, warning Judah of the trouble to come. But, like so many of the warnings and judgments from the prophets there was also a message of hope.

I have emphasized the theme of "kings" in the Story of the Bible for one reason: to highlight the message of the prophets concerning the day God would once again reign as king. Jeremiah writes:

Behold the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name



A RIGHTEOUS BRANCH

Steven Lloyd

The prophet Jeremiah foretold the coming doom of Judah and Jerusalem, and lived to see the words of his prophecy fulfilled. Judah's problems began early. When seen from a bird's eye view, one strand of the Story the Bible tells can be summarized in this fashion. God begins by ruling and reigning over His creation as King. The Psalmist affirms that "The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord sits enthroned as king forever" (Ps. 29:10). Psalm 10:16 affirms, "the Lord is king forever and ever."

Later in the Story, the elders of Israel approach Samuel, the prophet, to give them a king so they might be like the nations around them (1 Sam. 8:20). Their request is

by which he will be called: 'the Lord is our righteousness (Jer. 23:5-6).

The reference to David is an allusion to God's promises to David (2 Sam. 7; Ps. 89). The fulfillment of this promise comes when God rules the world again through His Son. This is the message of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It is at the heart and core of Peter's message on Pentecost. Notice Peter's main points: Jesus was "attested to you by God...delivered up...crucified...killed...raised up...exalted...ascended." His conclusion? "Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified" (Acts 2:36).

Jeremiah's prophecy is fulfilled. God is once again ruling through His Son, Jesus Christ. This is the good news!

CW

TRAINING OUR CHILDREN

Matt Gibson

Much information has been written on the subject of children. Although much information is available, we need the Bible for direction and doctrine. Children are precious souls needing to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).

The world's smallest school is the home. Proverbs 1:8-9 states, "My son hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother. For they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck." Children mimic and memorize their parent's attitudes and actions. Moses stated in Deuteronomy 6:3-9 to the children of Israel that they were to teach their children diligently the commandments of God. Paul speaks of Timothy being trained in the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:15). A child will be raised in knowing Christ or Baal, righteousness or unrighteousness, light or darkness.

A child is governed by rule before he is governed by principle. Paul said in 1 Cor. 13:11, "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." Our parents gave us rules to follow we did not understand. For

example: We had to be in the house before dark. As children, we may not have understood the principle involved, but we understood the rule. Jesus was even governed by rule before He was governed by principle (Luke 2:50). All of our lives have been influenced by what we have been taught and how we have been trained (Pro. 22:6). God's wisdom says to give a child what he needs, and when the child is older, he will know what is needed (Gen. 18:19; Pro. 6:20-23).

How should I raise my children? The peerless answer is for us to live the Bible and teach it to our children. What can and should a child learn from parents?

- Put God, Christ, and the Church as the main priorities of life (Ex. 20; Matt. 22:37-40; 6:33; 7:5; 1 John 5:3-5; 1 Pet. 1:22; 2:17).
- A child can learn to incorporate daily Bible reading into their lives (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Tim. 4:13-14; 1 Cor. 3:1-4).
- A child can learn to be careful of the company he/she keeps (1 Cor. 15:33; Amos 3:3). "No" is rooted in a person's life at a young age, not when they are in their teens.
- To be pure in mind, heart and life is worth more than material possessions (Matt. 16:24-26).
- Becoming a faithful, fervent Christian is the most important attitude and action in life (1 John. 2:14). We are examples to everybody, including children.

Parents, college is not the most important thing in your child's life! Becoming a Christian, and should they choose to marry, marrying a Christian. These are the most important! Yet, Christian parents often put more emphasis on schooling, extra-curricular activities, and college than they will the soul of their child. We shall be found wanting in God's favor following this path.

I have often been asked what Wendy (my lovely wife) and I do in rearing our children. First, I am not perfect, and my children know that; not because of the things they see and hear, but because of communicating my weaknesses, faults, and sins against them to them. It is my prayer their tender hearts see more vividly my love for God and them than they do my weaknesses towards God and them.

There are three words every parent must always remember and live in raising their children: love, consistency, and discipline. If any one of these three are not met in our thoughts, words, and deeds, it causes an imbalance in our lives and destroys the effort and work we have invested in our children. Notice, none of these three words indicate perfection (without sin).

Trent Kennedy

- Love - Love God the most, your spouse the second most, and your children the third. Always maintain this order. Why? If you love your children more than God, then you will defend and enable them in their wrong doings.
- Consistency – Our light must not flicker, and work must never end (Matt. 5:14-16; 1 Cor. 15:58). Anxiety in children elevates whenever their normal schedule is interrupted. We know this is going to happen. Consistent parents help their children to overcome in these situations which prepares them for the *bumps* in this life.
- Discipline – Just about every parent is an expert *disciplinarian*. How do I know this? Try discussing your ideas or correct their child in a way that opposes their ideas and watch what happens. Parents need to incorporate instructive and corrective discipline. The Bible calls for spanking, PERIOD! (Pro. 22:15; 23:13-14). Here is what has worked for Wendy and me while incorporating love and consistency towards our four sons. As soon as they were old enough to rebel or defy our commands, often with a scream or cry or temper tantrum (depending on which son), they received ONE verbal warning. If they persisted, they received a spanking, not beating. Our definition of this is spank hard enough for them to remember what consequence is for such behavior, but never hard enough so as to cause injury. Parents, their defiance begins at a much earlier age than you might think. When the boys became old enough to understand verbal communication, we always began with the corrective, discipline process by explaining to them what they did was wrong before God and us so they knew why they were receiving spanking. Trust me, this is the hardest part, but it allows for uncontrolled anger to not be an option leading us to doing something we would always regret and sin. There are some actions that forgo verbal warning such as lying and being disrespectful.

Children are the fruit of the home, and one can really know what the home is like by watching how the children act and behave (Matt. 7:18; Ps. 127:4; Eph. 3:17). Children are to obey and honor their parents (Eph. 6:1-3). Little ones are very special people, and they should be taken care of with the utmost care. I dearly love my sons and would fight to the death for them. May we raise our children to love the Lord, and in doing this great task; let us use the Bible as our only substance, stability, and source (2 Pet. 1:3).

CW

The second half of Psalm 42 begins with a prayer to God. In calling upon God, the psalmist uses the possessive pronoun “my.” It seems that he still has an unwavering faith in God to do what he is asking (cf. Jas. 1:6-8). When his personal pep talk in verse 5 did not ease his pain, notice where the writer turns, to God. This is the only proper perspective. In times of distress people need to turn to God. There are times for doctors, psychologists, protests, voicing concerns, turning to friends and family, putting hands to the plow, to vote, and on and on and on. But, when our families, our cities, our states, our aligned political parties, our nations, and our world are faced with unrest, uncertainty, turmoil, strife, depression, desperation, despair, disease, sin, hate, or otherwise, before we act, and we must act, can the church, can the individual Christian, can the head of a Christian home, can a minister, can an elder, can each one of us first give ear to the counsel of scripture and saturate our study, our attitudes, our words, and our actions with constant prayer? This world needs our attention, but the psalmist anchored himself in God first.

Three geographical markers are given in Psalm 42:6b: “the land of the Jordan,” the Hermons,” and “the hill Mizar,” or as the ASV margin reads, “the little mountain.” The river that borders Israel from north to south, the mountain range in the north, and an unknown hill (“Mizar”) serve as memories of the promised land for the psalmist. All three of these were likely in the north or Israel, near the allotment of Dan, near the source of the Jordan River. An Israelite carried into captivity might remember those landmarks fading into the distance as he was carried away into captivity. The last things of Israel he might have seen could have been the Jordan River, the distant peaks of the Hermons, and that small hill. It is also possible that these geographical markers simply were the things brought to mind by the psalmist when he contemplated home, the land of God’s promise.

With his mind on the geography of Israel, the psalmist seems to turn his attention to nature (vs. 7). While mediating on God’s natural world can be soothing, anchoring, relaxing, and a great way to declutter our minds, it seems that the psalmist only falls further into despair. In contemplating God’s creation, his mind recalls waterfalls and beaches.

However, as he begins to place himself into nature and into this image, he sees himself poetically drowning. To be at the bottom of a waterfall without the ability to move or to be in the midst of the ocean with waves crashing upon your head is the description of desperation. Lost. Drowning. Dying. Helpless. Hurting. Unable to see a reprieve. The writer is in a place of helplessness, and so many of us today might see ourselves in similar circumstances.

Considering the desperation of verse 7, it is no surprise that the writer turns his attention back to the person of God (vs. 8). Using the covenant name of God, Jehovah, for the first and only time in Psalm 42 and 43, the writer focuses on the tender mercy or loving kindness or covenant love of God. When his mind began to run away (verse 7), he anchors himself in the loving nature of God. God's person, His character, is a respite for all those upon whom life is beating down. The psalmist trusts God to be with him in both the daytime and in the nighttime where God's song will accompany him (cf. Job 35:10). He calls Him, "the God of my life." He believes in the consistent nature of God. He trusts in God's desire to comfort and to deliver His people when they hurt. Day or night, sunshine or rain, good or bad, God will be with those who are faithful (Matt. 6:25-34, Rom. 8:38-39, 2 Tim. 2:19).

The psalmist struggled and strayed in his mind, but the God of Heaven was the God of his life. At times, we may find ourselves struggling and hurting, feeling helpless. It is in those moments that we look beyond nature to the promises of God and the respite He provides.

CW

WHY NO INSTRUMENTS ?

Clay Bond

The Psalmist declared, "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker" (Psa. 95:6). One of the greatest privileges we have as God's creatures is that of kissing toward our Creator in the reverential adoration called "worship." When we engage in this great blessing, it should be our utmost desire to approach God in sincerity (Josh. 24:14; John 4:24) and to worship Him with our "whole heart" (Psa. 9:1; 111:1; 138:1). The failure to properly prepare ourselves to approach God causes our worship to become vain and nothing more than

noise (Matt. 15:7-9; Amos 5:23).

According to John 4:23-24, our Heavenly Father is seeking "true worshipers." True worship requires respect: "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him" (Psa. 89:7). True and genuine worship gets Heaven's attention (Rev. 8:1-4). In fact, when we worship, our Lord Jesus Christ is with us: "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee" (Heb. 2:12).

If our worship is to be pleasing and acceptable to God, rather than vain and meaningless, we must worship according to the truth of God's word (John 17:17), using it to establish authority for what we practice (Col. 3:17). This may be done by direct, explicit command, by example or by necessary inference. As Christians, we are to worship God according to the new covenant He has made with us (Heb. 1:1-2; 9:16-17). This new covenant includes new instructions for worship.

Generally when someone visits a worship assembly or even hears that we belong to the church of Christ, the first question they ask is, "Why don't you use instruments?" Based on the means of establishing Biblical authority listed above the absence of authority for the use of mechanical instruments can be easily established by simply reading the entire New Testament. In the New Testament of Jesus Christ we find no explicit command to use mechanical instruments, we have no example of Christians using mechanical instruments and no passage(s) in the New Testament which cause us to infer that instruments were used or may have been used by our first century brethren.

The argument that the New Testament "doesn't say not to" is one of the first lines of defense for those who desire instrumental music in worship. One of the things we learn from the Old Testament is that our God has ever been a God of details. For example, in Genesis 6 when God gives Noah instructions for building the ark, He does not forbid Noah to use oak, maple, or cedar. He simply told Noah what to use, gopher wood. Also noteworthy is that the Israelites were never forbidden to move the Ark of the Covenant using carts and oxen as David attempted to do (1 Chron. 13 and 15). They were simply told how to move it (Num. 4:15). What we see in these cases is the "law of exclusion" in action. When our Lord tells us what to do and how to do it all else is excluded.

Another common argument used goes something like this "David used instruments, therefore so can we." Evidence can easily be found in the Psalms (Psa. 33, 150) to support the claim that David used instrument in the worship he offered.

The first part of this assertion is clearly correct. However, in order to return to the Old Testament for authority to use mechanical instruments, one must reject the authority of Christ, Who sealed His new covenant with His own blood and Who by changing the priesthood necessarily changed the law (Heb. 9:16-17)!

We must remember that our Lord has infinite capability in His use of language and the written word. His vocabulary is not limited, nor is it incomplete, He forgets nothing. Several times in the New Testament Christians are commanded to sing (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 13:15). In these passages we find a beautiful synopsis of the power of Christians blending their voices together in worship to God. If His desire is to be worshipped and praised by the use of our voices accompanied by the beauty of stringed instruments, drums, and trumpets, I cannot help but think He would have instructed us to do so.

Long ago Jehovah God said, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts” (Isa. 55:8-9). God’s instruction for us to sing, making melody in our hearts is a wonderful commentary on what really matters to our Creator and God. To my human ears, singing accompanied by the music of a well-played instrument is beautiful; but then I am not able, as God is, to hear the music and melody of the heart of man as he humbly worships His Savior. “Why no instruments?” Because our God desires “the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (Heb. 13:15).

CW

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A failure to grow in the knowledge of God’s word leaves one at a high risk of being “tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine” (Eph. 4:14) and “overtaken” (Gal. 6:1) by the adversary (1 Pet. 5:8). To prevent sin sickness, Paul encouraged the consumption of “sound doctrine” (Titus 2:1), and being “sound in the faith” (Tit. 2:2). Likewise, Peter admonished “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby” (1 Pet. 2:2). Just as physical sickness is common to all, sin (spiritual sickness) is common to all—the sickness may at times be more severe, and the cause may vary, but all are susceptible.

In addition to considering the sickness of Peter’s wife’s

mother, consider the Savior. Luke records that Jesus “stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her” (Luke 4:39). We do not know the length of this woman’s illness, yet the seriousness is evident (Luke 4:38). It is equally clear that none but Jesus could provide the cure for her malady. Jesus had already demonstrated His power over sickness and diseases (cf. Luke 4:23; Matt. 4:23-25). Those diseases unchecked through the care of physicians were easily vanquished by His power (cf. Luke 9:43-48).

How similar is our sinful condition! Sin, a malady of the soul, can only be extinguished by Christ. Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). He is both our sacrifice (John 1:29) and our High Priest (Heb. 3:1). It is the blood of the sacrifice of the lamb of God without spot or blemish (1 Pet. 1:19) that provides the cleansing and soul saving power for the sin-sickness of humanity.

Finally, consider the servant. At first, Peter’s wife’s mother was in no condition to serve. Sick with a great fever, she was not fit; she lacked soundness of body and mind. Only after Jesus healed her did she have the strength. Afterward, however, she was not only able to serve but doubtlessly compelled. Strength of body returned. She had hope for tomorrow. How could she not serve the One who had restored her health and saved her life?

Again, this stands as an incredible parallel to man in sin. In sin, man is unfit to serve God. Walking in the darkness of sin, man has no fellowship with God (1 John 1:5-7). Paul instructed Timothy that a man must purge himself of dishonorable things that he might be “useful for the Master” (2 Tim. 2:21 - NKJV). Sinful man has neither the spiritual strength nor the right to serve God.

However, delivered from sin through the power of Christ’s blood, man is not only fit to serve but compelled. John declared Jesus to be “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The Hebrews writer affirmed that our sins and iniquities are “remembered no more” (Heb. 8:12)! When we are made whole by the blood of Christ we are made fit to rise up and serve God. Surely such a great salvation (Heb. 2:3) received through the grace, mercy, and love of God should compel us to serve.

From the biblical account of Peter’s wife’s mother, we learn the lessons of man’s sin-sick condition, his need for a Savior, and our accountability to serve. Realizing our lost condition, we have come to Christ for salvation. Applying His blood to our sins through obedience, we enjoy spiritual health and strength. Let us rise up and serve.

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From the Director's desk



Steven Lloyd
Director SWSBS

We are well into the first quarter of the school year, and students are experiencing the reality of the workload. There is no way for a student to know how challenging that workload is until they are under it and try to carry it forward in order to avoid being crushed by it.

Having said that, the great consolation is that there is no greater subject matter the student's mind could entertain than the one addressed in class. In particular, there is no greater idea their minds could entertain than God Himself. He is the main character in the Bible. He is the hero of the story. He is its author.

The writers of Scripture characterize God as being in a category all His own. When Isaiah contrasts God with the idols he asks, “To whom then will you liken God, or to what likeness compare with him?” (Isa. 40:18) and “To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? Says the Holy One (Isa. 40:25).”

If God cannot be compared to anyone else or to anything else, how are we to come to any knowledge about Him? Answer: we are utterly dependent on Him to tell us Who He is and what He is like, and He does so through the writers of Scripture.

We take the students through the Scriptures line by line. We try to do so without getting lost in the merely academic side of things. We do not want them to miss the main attraction: God. Nevertheless, it takes both intellectual effort as well as the right spiritual attitude.

Imagine how much stronger the church can be because these students take two years out of their life to saturate their minds with truth about God. They cannot help but be transformed by the experience.

The church at Southwest and the faculty of the school are privileged to see the transformation that takes place over those two years, and many of you are blessed to take part in their support. We hope their success is manifest to all (1 Tim. 4:15).

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