

# finding **TRUTH** & *Hope*

ISSUE # 42

**I** magine a moment with maybe wildly blazing evening hues, and everything material around you melting away! All you can see is the look of the Father of all creation gazing deep into your being. Will you be one of His own that day? Will there be acceptance for you? What spirit—what motivation, has filled your days, preoccupied your thoughts? Have you prepared for this moment? What have you been reaching out for—only more stuff? Have you made peace with your Maker? Is He your Lord?

Here is the invitation! Now is the accepted time. We can only come to Him as He draws us! He wants to shepherd us. He wants to give us a pure, clean, and innocent spirit. He wants us to hear His voice. He wants us to follow Him. Come to Him today.

(The last day will be so much more than what we described above.)

*And the angel...lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven,... and the earth, and the things that therein are,...that there should be time no longer (Revelations 10:5-6).*

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## *Does God Still Nudge a Nation?*

**The Bible says God holds the heart of the king in the palm of His hand. Certainly that was true in Old Testament days, but how about in our own country? Consider the events of Sept. 13, 1862.**

President Lincoln was despondent that summer, as bad news cascaded in upon him. Political support for the Civil War was dying; troop casualties were staggering; and every battle, it seemed, ended in defeat. The Confederate army had pounded across the Potomac just 25 miles from Washington; and pressure was building for Lincoln to free the slaves. He had considered this, but abolition was political dynamite, even in the North.

Lincoln's own faith had been weak; he was at best a skeptic, at

best a cultural Christian. But he had promised that if the Union were granted a victory, even one, he would regard the event as a sign from God and free the slaves.

On Sept. 13, two Union soldiers on patrol found a complete set of Confederate plans for the coming battle for Washington.

Immediately, they sent it to headquarters, and the next day Union troops launched an attack at Antietam Creek. Union forces routed the South, temporarily at least.

The following Monday, Lincoln

informed his cabinet that he would issue the Emancipation Proclamation. "Though this might seem strange... God had decided this question in favor of those that are enslaved," he said.

God's nature has not changed, nor has He turned His back on civil governments. Praying for our leaders is always a worthy and essential task of biblical citizens, *even when we don't agree with them*. We pray that not only would God hold them in the palm of His hand, but that He would nudge them in wiser directions.

Used with permission

Tom Minnery

# **Jesus is the Example**

**by Sis. Sarah Irene Spanogle**

*For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth (1 Peter 2:21-22).*

What an example Christ set for us! But we can only walk circumspectly (diligently, perfectly) in His steps after being empowered by the Holy Spirit. We marvel at the difference in Peter's character after the day of Pentecost. And we see the same transformation in Saul who became the apostle Paul. After Saul was converted on the way to Damascus and Saul acknowledged Jesus as the Lord, Ananias laid hands on Saul, and Saul was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then Saul became the apostle Paul. Romans Chapter 7 gives Paul's description of himself before his conversion. Paul's desire was to do good, but the understanding and power to do good was not there. Saul was in a wretched condition, desiring with his mind to serve God, but powerless over the law of sin. So many people think Christian converts are powerless over sin until they go to heaven. But Paul goes on to say in Romans 8:1-2, that there is deliverance FROM this wretched condition HERE in this life! *There is therefore NOW no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free FROM the law of sin and death.* Jesus died to free us FROM the the law of sin. Praise God! Paul gave no excuse for the flesh. And neither can we. Hallelujah! Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed? (Acts 19:2). God wants us to have Him!

## **The Power of Sanctification**

**by Sis. Sarah Irene Spanogle**

*Isaiah 57:13 ...but he that putteth his trust in me shall possess the land, and shall inherit my holy mountain.*

What a wonderful promise! It brings to mind 1 Thessalonians 4:4, *That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.* Through sanctification, the abiding power of the Holy Spirit, we can possess (control) our flesh: attitudes, spoken words, and conduct. How many wars, divorces, bankruptcies, etc. could be avoided, how many good jobs and careers retained if people could possess (control) their flesh! We must have God's power IN us to maintain self-control in every situation. But Jesus promised He would NEVER leave us or forsake us. Jesus will be with us when we face those trying times, giving us wisdom and strength to say and to do the right things. What a benefit to possess (control) our vessel, maintain self-control, knowing we are not facing our hard situations alone. Matthew 5:5 says *Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.* To *inherit the earth* is to possess, and maintain control over this earthly flesh. Self-control requires meekness. In Matthew 11:29 Jesus said, *Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart.* We must learn from Jesus' example ---->

of how to possess and maintain control over our own spirit. We must not only learn how, but we must DO it. Philippians 4:13, *I can DO all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.* By looking unto Jesus, we can come to the end of our day with no regrets for what we said or did. What a great benefit to live this way! It is the very BEST way to live and the only right way to die.

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***For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*** (2 Timothy 1:7)

### Steward your Mental Health

Edited excerpts of podcast of Nicole Zasowski

Our feelings are not our fault, but they are our responsibility. Name the truth about that feeling. This is what I want to do about it. Let's take deep breathes and feel our blood pressure come down.

Do not let the perfect get in the way of the good. Choose progress over perfection. Instead of over perfecting, let's start small and simplistic. Come as you are; be yourself. The best thing you can give your family is yourself.

We are chosen. We are masterpieces of God. God is the source of all truth. He has given us a choice of whether we are going to echo that truth.

Mental health requires work. The brain prefers what it knows. The brain will know what it practices.

[ Editors insert: No wonder we are exhorted in God's word (Philippians 4:8) what trains of thought to entertain.]

The brain will believe what is most familiar. [Satan knows this too! No wonder he uses the well worn tools of discouragement and accusations relentlessly, over and over.]

Take responsibility of the feeling. We want someone else to take responsibility of this pain inside of us. Try not to trauma dump on others or "sad fishing" saying, "I can't believe this happened again." Trust God is going to walk you through every valley. *The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee* (Numbers 6:25).

Have intentional gratitude. Savor what you remember about a joyful moment, the sound of your child's laugh. Notice and keep those more joyful events. [ Wouldn't the whole world be a better place if we each would labor to think sweet thoughts rather than sour!]

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***Finding Truth & Hope*** is edited by Nelson & Genece Doolittle, assisted by Carlos Doolittle.

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## GOD'S 5 Minutes: The Laughing Sorrowful Heart Revisited

- All earthly joys touch but part of our nature; only divine joy fills and satisfies all. In earthly joy there is always some part of us unsatisfied. Pleasure may satisfy appetite, but what of conscience, and reason, and the higher aspirations of the soul? The laughter that echoes through the passions of the flesh is the hollower the louder it is, and reverberates most through empty spaces.
- Many earthly joys die in the very act of being enjoyed. Some are followed by swift revulsion and remorse; all soon become stale; some must be left behind as one goes on with life. All are at the mercy of external things. Those which a person has not left, he has to leave. The saddest lives are those of pleasure-seekers, and the saddest deaths are those of the ones who sought for joy where it was not to be found, and sought for their gratification in a world which leaves them, and which they have to leave.

My glad message to you today is that there is a realm in which abide fullness of joy and pleasures forever more. Surely they order their lives most wisely who have taken the ancient vow, Habakkuk 3:17-19, *Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places.*

*None of us can fully control the environs of our lives. It is an exercise in futility to base our fulfillment and happiness on doing so. Perhaps, if you listen closely even now, you can hear the voice of the Savior calling, inviting you to know the deep satisfaction of His inner peace. Have you talked to Him today?*

Visit many GOD'S 5 Minutes broadcasts at [www.churchofgodtruth.com](http://www.churchofgodtruth.com).

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## *The MOST Real Existence*

Lately, when I awake too early, I have lain in bed thinking of people, family members, individuals of our past, Bible characters, etc. We share a rich heritage of memories.

When we complete this life, I think we will burst forth to a rich and real acquaintance of those gone before. Everything about us that seems so permanent, sturdy, and real is merely held in place (molecules, nature's laws, etc.) by the spoken word of God! I am sure we will then find that "Life Eternal" is the real, most real existence. We see only through a veil darkly now! Then we will know Jesus and loved ones (who lived their short lives). If we think creation, as we know it, is grand—hummingbirds, soaring eagles, majestic mountains and sunsets . . . *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him* (1 Corinthians 2:9). . . . *If it were not so, I would have told you* (John 14:2).

Let's catch a glimpse of the heart of God: *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* (Jeremiah 29:11).

We are desperate for the Lord to be our Shepherd to help us to make it. We are desperate for His blood and precious salvation that we may be *clothed upon* (2 Corinthians 5:4). *My sheep hear my voice, and I know*

them, and they follow me (John 10:27). For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God (Romans 8:14 ).

We are desperate and can simply ask for His arms to be about us, to direct us, to guide our thoughts and actions every day, We can tell him anything and everything. As a Father in heaven, He knows more about us than we know about ourselves.

This is the relationship needed: communing; praying without ceasing (daily, not stopping); acknowledging Him, **for he careth for you**; yielding (not bristling or resisting). May God help us to have an “up to date” relationship between our souls and Him. As we embrace His Spirit within us, we will have the beginning of eternal life within us. I believe, at our last breath, it will be just a small step over to the other side. We can have a token (earnest, down payment) here on this time side of eternal life! It will only expand to something so much larger on the other side. ETERNAL LIFE! *I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly (John 10:10).*

Revelations 22:1-2 *And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on **either side** of the river . . . tree of life . . . leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

We are on time side, but I think a small step will take us across the river of death if we have ETERNAL LIFE already alive and working in our bosom. May we meet Him in peace, ND

## Embrace Suffering

Edited excerpts of message by Bro. Dan Doolittle Monark 2025-7-20 #10763 churchofgodpreaching.com

God has not promised skies of blue, but He has promised strength for the day and His undying love. Jesus prayed, *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt* (Matthew 26:39). **When we have suffering or affliction, we want it gone!** It is so important that I put my hand in His and tell Him, “Lord, where you lead me, I will follow.”

I am very thankful God has a hedge about each one of us. Are we also going to be willing to accept the problem things that come to us? 1 Peter 1:7 speaks of the trial of our faith being more precious than of gold that perisheth. All of life's temporal things are not as valuable as this! Job said, *But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold* (Job 23:10).

All of our lives are hanging by a thread. Even if you have no trouble today, realize God may put something in your path to help you make Heaven! We can have peace in knowing God has this in control. He is not willing for any to perish. He wants me to make it to Heaven also. *Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: . . . and lead me in the way everlasting* (Psalms 139:23-24). Sometimes I want Him to lead a different way than where He is leading. “Lord, lead me in the way everlasting.” Let me put my hand in His.

## That Other Disciple

Edited excerpts of message by Sis. Jody Inman Loranger, LA 7-3-25

Peter got himself in the Bible 191 times. Meanwhile, that other disciple may have been left dragging the net. Peter's brother, Andrew, was mentioned in the Bible only 13 times.

There is a place for each of us to fill. What if Andrew hadn't done his part? God wants to use us! God wants us to be busy bringing people to Jesus. Andrew brought the boys lunch of five loaves and two fishes to Jesus (John 6:5-9). Certain Greeks desired to see Jesus. Philip got Andrew to help him tell Jesus (John 12:20-22). **Can we all be an Andrew?** Do we have to have a title or a name? **I'm going to quietly bring people to Jesus.**

They say that kiwi has twice the vitamin C as an orange. I may be the weird little kiwi. We may be so unseen that no one knows what we're doing. If we've been holding back, now is the time to press. There are full time openings. **Fill the place that God wants you to fill.**



# Prepare to be spoken to

1 Kings 19:11-13, I've often looked at this incident where Elijah heard the still small voice. But one thing stood out to me today that I never noticed before. He had been running from Jezebel who was trying to kill him, and he had gone down into a cave and was living there. He probably went pretty far down so that he knew he wouldn't be detected. I'm sure he felt pretty safe and comfortable, not desiring to leave and possibly be exposed to nearby opposition. But he was instructed to come up out of the cave and stand upon the mountain before the Lord. He had to get up from the place that had become familiar to him and climb up and out (probably with some difficulty because some caves are difficult to maneuver). But once he came to the place where he wasn't complacent, he was able to listen for the voice of God... and the Lord met him there.

There are two parts to the definition of "Listening." One is that we make an effort to hear what's being said. The second is to be prepared to be spoken to, by being alert and ready to hear something before it's even said.

In order to hear what the Lord would have for us to hear, we must emerge from an environment of complacency. And we have to be in a place where we not only hear when the Lord speaks, but also be watchful and alert at all times for any opportunity where the Lord begins to speak. Lord help me; this is something I desire to do better in! Lord bless your day. Bro. Justin Broome

## The gentle nudging of God

Edited excerpts of message by Bro. Brandon Martens Loranger, LA November 23, 2023

Are you waiting for lightning and thunder, or can God gently whisper your name? Start young teaching our children how to hear the Lord. There's not a person here that God is not trying to speak to. **Let's not learn the hard way.** He's working. **Lord, help us to listen.** Have I learned how to listen? The thing paramount is you've got to have a willingness to want to do right! You don't fix the problem by ignoring it. Be honest about the situation.

Sin keeps propagating itself over and over. There's a force behind it. The Lord came to give us something better than "sin you must." There is a way to stop it. Any moment you finally say, "Lord, search me, try me, see if there is any wicked way in me," that's all it takes. God's not dragging you with a rope around your neck. Be attentive to the Lord's gentle voice. He's not going to play a shouting match. The Lord's not going to guide you with massive things. Don't wait for Him to do some Mount Carmel moment. Just don't ignore the Lord. I am burdened that we not ignore the nudging of the Lord.

## Wayside

Edited excerpts of message by Bro. Rod Smith Loranger, LA December 3, 2023

Create time and space in our lives to understand, to bring forth fruit. Allow seed to fall into a heart that's seeking fervently. *We can get into a place that we're not interested in course change any more because "We've got it."* Acknowledge that I am wrong. *Light isn't there for me to see anymore if I refused it... hardened!* I want to live my life all the way to the end as soil **ready to receive the Word.** Walk while you have the light. Oh, when the seed is sown, take action. *If we're not willing, we will be guided by a spirit that is greater than our own and be eternally separated from God.* As humans we're inclined to go the way that appeals to us. Yet there are times the Lord calls for us to take a hard right and push the brakes. May God help me to keep myself in a place where the Lord can reach me.

## Rest in God

- + Submit to **GOD**. HUMBLE ALL of your self to HIM!
- + Be aware of and sternly RESIST in FAITH Satan's attack and tactics. Tell him **NO** and to **GO**, in Jesus' name!
- + Then, focus on **GOD** (Who will also come to you), ignoring Satan's antics to draw your attention again and thus control you again!
- + **GOD** cares about us and FOR us--and loves us! POUR OUT TO THIS **GOD** ALL CONCERNING OR PERTAINING TO YOU (and to all you care about at all) and REST IN HIM and REJOICE IN HIM!

--Christy Robertson

James 4:7-10 and 1 Peter 5:6-9

self: efforts, ideas, fears, worries, etc.

Satan's antics: tricks, lies, tempting "facts," thoughts, fears, and "Oh! I simply must address this angle of the situation!"

GOD -- ALL-MIGHTY, AMAZING, PERFECT, FAITHFUL, and CANNOT-BE-IMPROVED-ON

Rejoice (Philippians 4:4) to be "cheer"ful; i.e. calmly happy or well off (*Strong's*)

## THAT PENKNIFE

Faith & Victory Oct. 1933 C. E. Orr (Scriptures added by Bro. Larry Wittenborn)

God is speaking to Jeremiah. Jeremiah is repeating the words of God to Baruch who is writing them on a roll. When the words of the Lord were written on the roll, the roll was read to Jehoiakim king of Judah. When Jehudi read the words of the roll to the king as he sat in his "winter-house" before the fire, he ordered the words that displeased him to be cut out, and Jehudi cut them out with a penknife and cast them into the fire.

**(Jer 36:8)** *And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD'S house.*

**(Jer 36:21-23)** *So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll: and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month: and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him. And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth.*

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That penknife is being much used today. Preachers are using it. The Bible is a much mutilated Book. But the penknife nor the fire can destroy the Word of God. Ministers who once knew the truth become worldly-minded, and then begins the terrible work of using the penknife. They will substitute “liberty of conscience” for the Word of God. They will tell us that if you believe that to be right, then to you it is right. Believing a thing to be right does not make it right. **That which is right is right though all the world might believe it to be wrong. That which is wrong is wrong though all the world believe it to be right.** Oh, the folly of substituting something for the Word of God! Men have used the penknife to the blinding of their eyes and the destruction of their souls. — C. E. Orr.

**(Rev 22:18-19)** *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

**(Mark 12:10)** *And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:* The stone (Jesus Christ) is the foundation of God’s Church, the foundation of the true Gospel of Christ and guidance by the Holy Spirit to the writers of the New Testament. Who are the builders? The (**builders**) are those that have taken it upon themselves to create an image of the church founded upon the imaginations of man, creating splits and divisions (sects and denominations). Larry Wittenborn

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## Looking at God's Abilities – Not our Inabilities

Joshua and Caleb Stand Firm 10/30/2022 Bible Lessons excerpt

What an amazing story! Joshua and Caleb saw the same giants and “impossibilities” the other ten spies saw, but they knew it was the LORD’s will for them to conquer the land and inherit it. To them, it didn’t matter what the obstacle was; God was still bigger. Because they knew God was faithful, they were able to hold on to their own faithfulness in believing God and move forward in the full confidence that God would do what he said he would do.

When it came time for the children of Israel to enter the land of Canaan forty years later, their entrance started with a single step into the flooded banks of Jordan (Joshua 3:15-16). In the same way, the secret to our faithfulness today in overcoming our giants and high walled cities starts with a simple, single step of obedience – deciding to trust God to help us in our battles. It matters not how impossible our obstacle is. God is well able to overthrow it as long as we do our part – that first simple step of saying, “Yes!” (Bro. Clifford Cole)

Caleb demonstrated faithfulness to God during the entire course of his life. Why do you think Caleb and Joshua saw success when the other ten spies saw defeat? It had to do with the fact that they kept their overall perspective of God’s demonstrated power of the past and their continued belief that the promises God had given regarding entrance to the Canaan land would also be accomplished.

Caleb was an eyewitness of the Israelite’s deliverance from the Egyptians and was aware of the afflictions the ten plagues had caused. He saw the Red Sea waters divided, and he personally walked across on dry land. He experienced being thirsty and hungry in the wilderness and drinking the sweet waters of Marah. He ate the manna that fell from heaven. He remembered the pillar of a cloud that led the Israelites by day and the pillar of fire by night.



Caleb's zeal to be faithful never diminished as he aged. He was blessed with exceptional strength, a keen mind. Later, when Caleb was eighty-five years old, he went to battle and successfully took one of the mountains inhabited with giants, which God had earlier promised to the children of Israel. Caleb's focus was not in his abilities, but on the proven faithfulness of God's power, wisdom, and presence. Let us "take heart."  
– Anonymous

## *How the Bible Educated America to live in Liberty*

Stephen McDowell (narrative of a podcast)

*Biblical education is primarily the responsibility of family.*

In early America, John and Abigail Adams trained and disciplined their children in their home. Their children were a product of Bible based, moral, and academic education. One of their children, John Quincy Adams, at fourteen was congressionally appointed to become secretary to the ambassador to Russia. Later, he was also ambassador to England, France, Prussia, and Holland. After being the sixth president, he served many years in the House of Representatives, and actually died in that building, on the job.

In the 1640's, the Puritan's preamble started schools to teach the people how to read, stating: "The chief project of that ole deluder Satan is to keep people ignorant. He knew that if he could keep them ignorant, he could keep them in bondage." Benjamin Franklin stated "It's in the region of ignorance that tyranny begins." Our founding fathers understood that. Tutors and colonial colleges were just an extension of the family.

The calling for all is to be ministers of God, not just pulpit ministers. So, Biblical education equips us to fulfill our calling and duty to whatever sphere of life we are called to—fulfilling our duties to the family, to the marketplace, to the church, government, science, you name it, to do what God wants us to fulfill to accomplish our calling and duty. As we do, we'll begin flourishing, and we'll provide needed goods and services. We will bring liberty and protect God-given rights and liberty. We will provide goods and services to make life better.

The philosophy and every aspect and component of education was biblical. The curriculum and model with how to set up and go about training next generations were according to biblical truth. The Bible was the essential text for early American education. In the 1690 John Lock horn book, the first reading lesson was the Lord's Prayer. Early on, the teaching tools assisting them had the Bible as the central text. When they began to produce textbooks as tools to assist parents, they were thoroughly biblical. The New England Primer was first published in 1690 and was widely used for a hundred years. It taught the alphabet with biblical examples and a rhyming alphabet.

"A – In Adam's fall we sinned all.

B – Heaven defined the Bible mine.

C – Christ crucified for sinners died." . . . and on and on

In first lessons, youth were taught the biblical view of life. In 1783, Noah Webster first published his famous Blue backed Speller, and over the next century it sold over a hundred million copies. He wrote it in order for every American to be self taught. **People could carry a Bible and a dictionary with them so they could teach themselves.** The speller was full of lessons like: "God will forgive those who repent of their sins;" "Examine the scriptures daily and set an example of good works;" "Those who enjoy the light of the gospel and neglect it's precept are more criminal than the heathen" were just a few of the things youth would read in Webster's Blue backed speller. Webster wrote many books. In his exhaustive dictionary of 70,000 words, as examples, he used thousands of scripture references. He defined words biblically. Today our dictionaries define words humanistically! We are indoctrinated in the ideology of secular humanism even when we define words. But when you compare this with Webster's original, they were given Biblical understanding of words

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like “education,” “law,” “government,” “morality,” and everything else. When you look at the other prominent text books like McGuffey's Reader, Murrey's Reader, Young Civil Government, and so many more, this just gives you an overview of what biblical education looks like. Biblical education produced the free nation of America and biblical education is what is required to turn America around and to pass on to future generations the world view necessary for us to live in liberty. Government schools today are not doing this.

Biblical education advances God's kingdom with good fruit. Jesus taught us in the Lord's Prayer to pray “Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven.” He wants His kingdom to come over every aspect of our nations, the laws, and the institutions. Our nations need to come under the Lordship, the Kingship of our Christ. That's the prayer that He taught us to pray.

Biblical education will advance His kingdom. It will bring His kingdom to individuals; it will bring it to nations. In Matthew 28, Jesus also told us to make disciples of all nations, “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” We disciple nations; we disciple children by teaching them to observe everything He commanded.

So we must teach truth. Education that teaches liberty is grounded in truth. Truth is revealed in the scripture. So, biblical education is a means of extending God's kingdom.

In contrast, state education extends man's kingdom. You know whoever controls the children controls the future. God has given that responsibility, not to civil government, but primarily to parents, for the governance of the children. The state, when it has pagan psychology, is contrary to the scripture. When they get in control, through all the powers and mechanisms they have, state education is certainly a strong influence in determining the culture. But state education will extend man's kingdom. It will propagate a man-centered psychology. Remember that Colossians tells us that man-centered psychology, according to the elements of this world brings bondage and captivity. Biblical education brings liberty.

To give the children to the bureaucrats, you might as well just give them everything else. So, if we turn over our children to the bureaucrats to educate them, we might as well give them our wallets, our bank accounts, our property, our liberty, our freedom, because they're going to end up taking it. That's what we see happening gradually, especially in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. State-controlled, state-compelled, state-mandated education has grown and grown, and the education they are receiving is not biblical education.

Biblical education is the key to the advancement of prosperity and liberty. Biblical education produced America as an exceptional nation. It produced the most free and prosperous nation in history. Christian ideas have transformed America and have spread to impact many nations of the world, where truth is embraced by individuals in these nations.

See, biblical education will pass the baton to future generations. We are in a race today. We are not in a 100 yard dash. We are in a relay race, and our goal for our generation is to pass that baton. We've got to 1) pick up the race to understand that we are IN a race to understand what the race is all about! 2) to understand the race track and where we're going. Our job is to run alongside the next generation. When we run alongside them, we are equipping them—giving them the knowledge, the character that they need, giving them the biblical education and everything they need to live in liberty themselves, bringing advancements in society. But then to show them how THEY are to pass it on to the next generation. We're to teach our children how to pass the baton to THEIR children, an important lesson that produces liberty—internal liberty but also liberty in every sphere of life: our families, our churches, our businesses, our communities, our laws, our government, and our economic systems. Man will not live free left to himself.

It is our duty or task to provide biblical education so that the generations that follow us will be able to advance liberty, and to have more blessing, more liberty, than we have ourselves.

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# *What God's Holy Spirit is and is not*

Edited excerpts of message by Bro. Rod Smith at Loranger, LA October 5, 2025

The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us. “For we know not what we should pray for as we ought”(Romans 8:26). Something, or someone that is sanctified is set aside for special use. In a human, it speaks of holiness, a person giving themselves to holiness, set apart unto God. The natural outcome will be bearing fruit of righteousness and will result in a changed life. The Holy Spirit is something that prepares and equips us. Lord, I invite your Spirit to come into my house [heart]. Set apart for life.

Now that the Holy Spirit lives within me, on my journey there is more land to possess. Jesus told us to take up our cross daily. Apostle Paul said, “I die daily.” The Holy Spirit was sent to be a comforter, a friend, to be ever present (John 14:16-27). He's with you. He doesn't come and go. Jesus didn't say He was going to send a judge with a long whip, but a comforter. He is to be a teacher, to help you understand. He is to be a “reminderer,” the Spirit of Peace, to give you power (Acts 1:8). I want to open the door of my life and ask Him to come in. Don't you? What is there to be scared of?

The Holy Spirit does NOT come to remove all temptation and trouble in life. (John 16:33) James, the first chapter, says “Blessed is the man that endureth temptation . . .” If you have sin in your life, we have an advocate [Jesus]. Don't leave it there! He “will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13).

The Holy Spirit is NOT a substitute for scripture. You may say, “The Holy Spirit has not convicted me,” and walk another way. John 17:17 says, “Thy word is truth.” Measurably, the Word is equal to truth. Be careful who is whispering to your mind; it can be a trick of the devil.

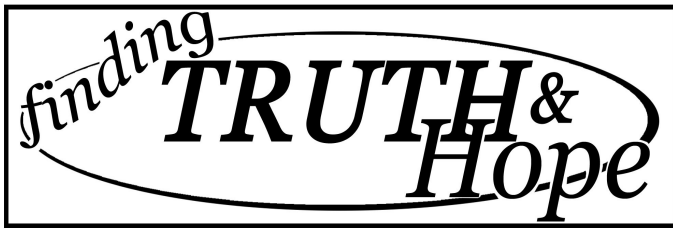
The Holy Spirit has NOT promised temporal prosperity. He has not promised to increase your bank account or bestow physical health. The Holy Spirit is NOT a short cut or a vending machine. He does not remove personal responsibility; we have to make good decisions. He will NOT force discipleship—it's a cooperative effort. When I come face to face with the unpleasant part of myself, I have the responsibility to change, obey, to repent, and not to gloss it over. After the defeat at Ai, the Lord told Joshua, “There's sin in the camp.” We have the responsibility to repent, so we don't end up in spiritual death. The Holy Spirit does not absolve us from responsibility. In the end, I have to be in the place where I want to follow the Lord with all of my heart.

The Holy Spirit is real and personal. We can talk with Him. He can be grieved. Let us yield our will to Him, surrendering daily.

[churchofgodmeetings.com](http://churchofgodmeetings.com)

Guthrie, OK Assembly – Dec. 26-Jan. 4 / Pacoima, CA Assembly– Dec. 31-Jan. 4

**MEETING REPORT:** The recent Assembly Meeting at Loranger, LA, proved a blessing with message topics of “Know Him,” “Bind Satan,” “The Devil's Wiles,” “How is your Courage?” “The Exchange,” “Get Understanding,” “Not Leaning,” and “Hearing.” Services may be viewed at You tube: Oak Grove Church of God (Loranger, LA). Audio recordings of messages are found at [churchofgodpreaching.com](http://churchofgodpreaching.com)



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best time to draw near to  
God. God help us to do it.*

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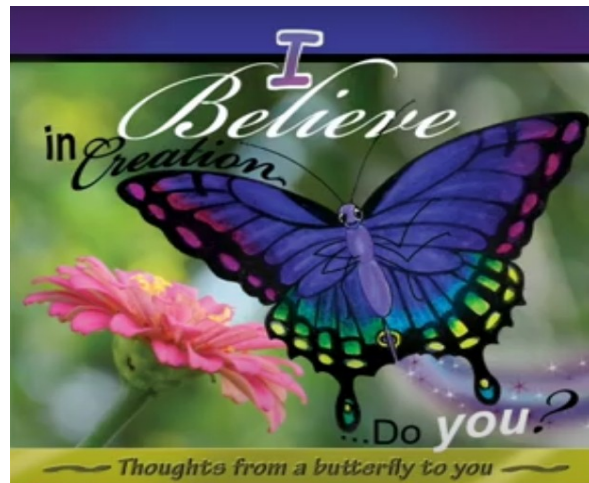
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