

Faith & Family News

A Spiritual Resource For Your Family

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Marriage Destroyers

The Devastating Effects of an Unforgiving Spirit

by Mike Ennis

And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Ephesians 4:32). Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye (Colossians 3:13). Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them (Colossians 3:19).

We have been looking at what can devastate a marriage relationship. The two devastating attitudes that we have considered so far are pride and selfishness. These two are very much related as is the third that we are going to look at in this article, an unforgiving spirit.

Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness

springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled (Hebrews 12:15). Bitterness is the direct result of an unforgiving spirit. It has the potential to absolutely destroy a marriage.

Pastor Charles Stanley asks the question. "Have you been wronged? Has somebody offended you, perhaps so intensely that you still reel with anger and pain? If that is the case, how did you respond to the situation? Perhaps you wanted to retaliate in some fashion so that the guilty party would pay for causing you to suffer. Your retribution may have taken the form of outward, noticeable action, or it might have been more subtle — a festering, negative attitude.

"When you have been hurt, there

is great temptation to feel justified in having an unforgiving spirit. Watch out! This is a landmine, and one of the Enemy's most destructive weapons. If you set foot in that direction, you may not experience an explosion right away, but the longer you harbor sentiments of unforgiveness, the more devastating the damage. You probably did not realize that such a response to pain is one of the most devastating things you can do to yourself. If you drive these negative feelings deep inside, bitterness will take root, and you will see implications in every area of your life"

("The Landmine of Unforgiveness," www.sermoncentral.com).

These are some of the potential negative effects of an unforgiving spirit on a marriage.

At best it will cause friction in a marriage. Anything that causes undue strain on a marriage should be eliminated. The reason that this is so is because of the one-flesh principle *And [Jesus] said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?* (Matthew 19:5). Cleaving means that the bond of your marriage should become stronger and stronger over the years. If you allow an unforgiving spirit into your marriage, it will weaken it, at best, and has the potential to eventually destroy it.

It can lead to the bitterness trap.

Failing to forgive someone who wrongs you causes bitterness in your heart towards that person. Bitter-

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The Fundamentals – Part II

by Matt Turner

In this issue we are going to continue our survey of the Fundamentals of the Christian faith. I am humbled by the privilege of writing about our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. After all, history literally revolves around Him. He truly is the most interesting Man in the world!

However, first we should review the first two points covered in the previous issue. Victory Christian Academy is founded upon God's Word. We believe it is inerrant, and it is the final authority on all matters. We also believe the Bible tells us all we need to know in order to enter into a personal relationship with God and have good relations with other people.

Furthermore, we believe in the God of the Bible, the Trinity—the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. They are three separate Beings, yet one God. Although it is possible to know there is a God from observing creation, you can't have a personal relationship with God without coming to Him through His Son, Jesus Christ,

by the power of His Holy Spirit. I admit I don't understand the Trinity and other things like the eternal nature of God.

The third fundamental of the faith deals with Jesus of Nazareth, my Savior. It states: We believe in the preexistence, incarnation, virgin birth, sinless life, miracles, substitutionary death, bodily resurrection, ascension to Heaven, and the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Since we have already dealt with the first point, we will move to the incarnation of Christ. We believe Jesus is 100% man and 100% God, all at the same time. Here's another characteristic of God I don't understand but accept by faith. This point has been a contentious topic ever since the beginning of Christianity. The next point is related to this one.

Jesus came into this world in a miraculous way. The Old Testament tells of the Messiah being born to a virgin. The New Testament gives the account of Mary's conception by the

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Editorially Speaking

"I Wanna talk about me . . ."

A rather ego-centric statement, huh? Some time ago, a popular country music singer had a hit song wherein he requested this very desire. It was a tongue-in-cheek appeal to a girlfriend who could only talk of herself, of which he had grown tired. He wanted some recognition in her world. While not a request that could be endorsed at all times, under such circumstances his self-centered desire could be understood.

The truth of the matter is, self-centeredness is a characteristic common, in varying degrees, to us all. For some this is not a characteristic that begs a remedy. Some are quite happy to live in a world they imagine revolves around them. Such ones find their sense of self-worth in how smoothly they can keep their world functioning. House clean at all times? Check! Car immaculately maintained? Check! Family neatly dressed and groomed? Check! Membership in socially beneficial organizations? Check! The list goes on ad infinitum. Let someone or something upset this neat little world and their whole sense of "self-worth" collapses. If self-worth is a goal to be achieved, certainly personal accomplishment is a shaky foundation upon which to base it.

Want to feel fulfilled without the self-deception of the afore-mentioned? It is God Who has given us purpose. We are a special work of His creation and the objective of His love. By extension, therein is our value. He made us different and unique in all of creation. He loved us to the point of giving His Son as The Sacrifice to redeem us from our sinful, fallen condition. He loves us when our house is messy, our kids need a bath, our dress is simple, our car is a rust bucket, and we couldn't get into a lodge if we wanted.

Faith And Family News is an outreach by some folks who want to live beyond themselves. They want to make a difference for God, outside of a self-focused world. If you are reading this, you are our objec-

tive, because you are His objective. If you are a Christian, we hope you are blessed and inspired in your walk with the Savior. If you are an unbeliever, we hope you will find within the pages of this little paper a reason to think seriously about your eternal destiny. *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all [mankind] most miserable* (1 Corinthians 15:19). All we have to offer is what has already been offered over 2000 years ago—**hope**. This is not hope in who we are or what we've achieved, but hope in Jesus Christ. When we were without hope, Christ died for us, so that, *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us* (Titus 3:5).

Special Note: On September 26, 2013 one of the dearest Christian



ladies to ever grace this earth left this earthly existence and went to be with her Lord. Margaret Beall Tice contributed

many insightful and edifying articles to Faith and Family News and was one of our most enthusiastic supporters. Only heaven will tell the impact she had in the lives of adults and children. Even when her health would no longer permit her to participate in many activities, she still testified to the saving grace of God and her hope in Him alone. In her passing she joined her late husband, Don, whom she served alongside in business, education and pastoral responsibilities from the day they were married. Faith and Family News extends its thoughts and prayers for the children and grandchildren of this sweet lady.



Morris Starkey is retired from Indiana University Kokomo and lives with his wife, Donna, in Miami County. They have two children and five grandchildren.

And this is the will of him that sent me,
that every one which seeth the Son,
and believeth on him, may have everlasting life:
and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:40

The Invitation

by Emily Pier

It is the season of warm drinks, scarves, and quiet, snowy, moonlit walks. It is also the season of reflection and study, at least for me. The colder temperatures compel me to stay indoors more. Snuggled under my throw with my journal on my lap and a scripture in my heart, I find myself at a naturally slower pace than when the warm sun constantly lured me outdoors. The recent rereading of Paul's letter to the Philippians about Christ's obedience unto death refreshes deep, deep gratitude. That reflection coupled with recent study in the gospels is stirring something in me lately that is requiring a response.

I marvel at the idea that every day, every movement in between Jesus' prophesied birth and predetermined death was purposefully and completely linked to the Father. He made no hasty decisions, no sinful reactions, no aimless wanderings. *Jesus gave them this answer: I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does* (John 5:19).

How divinely beautiful and perfect.

How utterly unlike me. I am so tempted to try to accomplish it all on my own. I forget the connection to the Almighty through prayer because of my own arrogant assumption that I can manage. It is not that specific, conscious thought I hear in my head. It is the undercurrent of unsundered parts of my heart that tether me to the temporary and frustrate my efforts.

I see it as I move through life sometimes unaware of my great need of Him. Often, I arrive at the end of my day and think, "When did I ask for help? When did I seek Your counsel?"

When did I ask what Your plans were?"

If all things as Colossians says were created "through Him and for Him" and if all things, including me, are "in Him held together," what in the world do I think I am doing? When I decide to reconsider this God who fashioned the world and who alone sustains it, when I remember that my heart beats because He wills it so, when my conscious efforts turn to consider His infinite wisdom and authority, then I am quick to my knees asking for His help because renewed in me is the truth: only He is able.

Only God can change my heart or someone else's. He alone knows tomorrow. He exclusively holds life in His hands. He solely satisfies.

... when I remember that my heart beats because He wills it so . . . then I am quick to my knees asking for His help because renewed in me is the truth: only He is able.

He urges me to request of Him: *Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you* (Matthew 7:7).

He does the work: *for it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his*

good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

He gives growth: *So neither he who plants or he who waters is anything, but only God who gives growth* (1 Corinthians 3:7).

Why do I try my days on my own in autopilot? As I consider again Jesus' dependence on the Father, I repent and ask for help. Their relationship was beautiful. Reading it in the gospels creates a longing in me to again accept that same daily invitation extended to believers: *abide. Abide in Me, and I in you* (John 15:4). Today, Emily, abide again.

Emily lives in Howard county with her husband and has been actively involved in community outreach, such as Kokomo Urban Outreach, Bridges Outreach, and New Leaf Mentoring.



A Bible that is falling apart, usually belongs to someone who isn't.

THE BOOK SHELF

by Jeanine Garrison



There is a dullness, monotony, sheer boredom in all of life when virginity and purity are no longer protected and prized. By trying to grab fulfillment everywhere, we find it nowhere.

— Elisabeth Elliot

It has become an accepted fact that many people are taking their first trip down the aisle of matrimony later in life than previous generations. In her article “Is There a Right Age to Get Married?” Ashleigh Schmitz states, “According to a report from the US Census Bureau from 2005 – 2009 the average age of first marriage is 27 for women and 29 for men” (www.yourtango.com). Although young people are delaying marriage, they are not delaying sexual activity or reproduction. In his March 25, 2013, blog Ezra Klein quotes statistics from *Knot Yet: The Benefits and Costs of Delayed Marriage in America*, a report from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy: “The average age for childbearing is now younger than the average age for marriage. By the age of 25, 44 percent of women have had a baby, while only 38 percent have married. We are very near the ‘tipping point’ when most births will happen out of wedlock” (Klein, “Nine Facts about Marriage and Childbirth in the United States.” www.washingtonpost.com). These statistics are frightening for any parent. Christian parents can do their best to raise their children according to biblical principles, but unfortunately many Christian teens are following the world, not the church. In our sex-saturated culture, how can parents encourage their children to adopt a biblical view of sex and avoid the traps

that the world and Satan have set for them?

A foremost Christian speaker/writer on the subject of sexual purity is Dannah Gresh. Her book *And the Bride Wore White*, first published by Moody Publishers in 1999, has touched the lives of thousands of young women. In a personal, warm tone Gresh vulnerably shares the joy and heartaches of her dating years. She exposes what she calls Satan’s Big Fat Sex Lies and discusses seven secrets to sexual purity. She includes many stories and testimonies from other women and interviews with well-known writers, speakers, and musicians, such as Joshua Harris and Josh McDowell. She includes a section at the end of each chapter called “It’s Your Turn,” where she invites the reader to review the material and journal her own thoughts.

This book is a must-read for young women, who are facing tremendous sexual pressure today. In a compassionate, been-there, arm-around-the-shoulder manner, Gresh fortifies her reader with all the biblical reasons and courage to say “no” to premarital sex and to choose God’s best for her life.

Many of us may wish there had been such a book when we were young, but even older women can benefit from its wisdom. Regardless of their ages, women who are

Bookshelf cont. on page 11

Stand in the Gap: Be a Mentor

by Jill Garrison

Many people use the start of the New Year as a time to evaluate their lives and to set new goals. As January is National Mentor Month, I challenge you to evaluate your life in regards to what you are doing for the next generation. Stop criticizing today’s young people and their parents and get involved in the fight for America’s youth.

America’s youth need mentors now more than ever, the main reason being the decline in traditional two-parent homes. As Tony Dungy says in his book *The Mentor Leader*, “one of the most undervalued areas in our society today is the family unit” (p. 10). The single-parent family is now culturally acceptable, but it is still detrimental to our children. God designed parenting to be a two-person job. Men and women bring different parenting styles to the table. When both parents are involved on a daily basis, the result is a more balanced approach to parenting. Children need daily interaction with both parents to thrive. Divorce doesn’t just break up a marriage; it breaks up a family. Recently, I heard a counselor speak on grief. She said that because of the way children work through things, the grieving process can last up to seven years for them. One can just imagine how long it takes a child to process all the pain that comes with a divorce, especially when in many cases the hurt just keeps going on and on. Many of them will still be dealing with the pain as adults.

Divorce limits a child’s interaction with both parents. Typically, interaction with dad is limited because

mothers are usually given custody of the children. Perhaps less obvious is the decrease in interaction with mom due to her working more in order to make ends meet. With less access to mom and dad, children experiencing the pain of divorce would greatly benefit from the listening ear of a caring mentor.

Both divorce and out-of-wedlock births have created a chronic problem in our society today—fatherlessness. Children without a father in their lives are often labeled “at-risk.” Studies show that they are at a higher risk for poverty, criminal behavior, drug use, teen pregnancy, and suicide. Boys who don’t have a father in their lives will look for a father figure elsewhere whether it be a relative, teacher, coach, or a gang member. Fatherless girls looking for the love and acceptance they are missing often end up becoming teen moms. Children whose fathers have left them are hurt and angry, and are therefore, more likely to engage in behavior that is destructive to others and themselves. A mentor can demonstrate God’s love to these children who so deeply crave a father’s love.

Unsupervised children engage in destructive activities as well. Many children ages 9–12 are at home alone from the time school lets out until mom and/or dad get home from work. These “latch-key kids” are left to their own devices for three or more hours a day. They sit around eating junk food, surfing the web, watching TV, and playing video games. Not only

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Breast Cancer Awareness

by Rachel Irwin



Since I’m writing this article in the month of October, I decided to write about breast cancer awareness. I have known many people with breast cancer. Many of them I’m pleased to say have won the battle against it; sadly others are no longer with us.

According to the Susan G. Komen website, breast cancer is the most common cancer, other than skin, in women in the United States. In 2013 near 300,000 women were diagnosed with breast cancer. There were nearly 40,000 breast cancer related deaths in 2013.

Breast cancer occurs when cells in the breast divide and grow out of normal control. This can occur slowly over time or rather quickly. The Komen website reports, “Between 50 and 75 percent of breast cancers begin in the milk ducts, 10 to 15 percent begin in the lobules and a few begin in other breast tissues.”

According to the Mayo Clinic, women can do some things to reduce their risk of breast cancer such as: limiting alcohol, eliminating smoking, maintaining a healthy weight, exercising, breastfeeding, limiting the use of hormone therapy, and

avoiding exposure to radiation and environmental pollutions.

Sometimes even the healthiest of people will develop breast cancer. Family history is a strong component in the development of breast cancer. The most common type of hereditary breast cancer involves inheriting the BRCA1 and BRCA2 gene. Inheriting one of these genes significantly increases the risk of breast cancer. You can be tested to see if you are a carrier of either gene. There is so much information on this topic. I encourage you to look it up.

With breast cancer, early detec-

tion is key. Self-breast exams are important, but sadly by the time you feel a lump, the breast cancer may have reached a critical stage. A mammogram can detect breast cancer sooner. A mammogram is an x-ray picture of the breast. The National Cancer Institute recommends that women age 40 or older have screening mammograms every 1 to 2 years.

Mammograms are generally not recommended or done on women under 40. Since I know several women who were diagnosed with breast cancer under the age of 40, I strongly

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What a Day That Will Be

by Marlin Carpenter

"What will Heaven be like?" a young boy once asked of me. "Will there be bowling and video games in Heaven?" Questions like these are very difficult to answer because we don't know everything about what Heaven will be like. The Bible doesn't give a lot of detail about the place where believers will spend eternity. However, since we will be with our Father in the fullness of His presence and love, we know we will experience glory beyond compare. As I work with young people, I have found the best answer I can give is to simply say, "Imagine Heaven the best you can make it, and I can promise you it will be far better than that!"

One thing we do know is that we will finally get to meet our Savior, Jesus Christ face to face! We know that there will be no more death and no more suffering. There will be no pain and no sickness. Behold the tabernacle of God

is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away (Revelation 21:3-4). Heaven will be perfect and it will be beautiful!

Have you ever considered what this means for the person who enjoys nature? If you think that flowers are beautiful here on earth, imagine how much more vibrant and colorful they will be in Heaven where Jesus is the light! Again, the Bible does not expound in great detail on the plant life

in Heaven, but I believe it is safe to assume that the same God who created the first earth and placed man in The Garden full of plant life which man was to tend, would also create the New Earth abounding with plant life. We do get a small glimpse of such in chapter 22 of Revelation where it says, *And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse.*

Imagine Heaven
the best you can make
it, and I can promise
you it will be far
better than that!

No pain means that tending the gardens of the New Earth will not bring aches to our muscles and bones. It means that roses won't have thorns and thistles won't have stickers. Oh, wait, there won't be

any thistles! That thought certainly strikes a chord of delight in the hearts of those of us who have once let a Canadian thistle go to seed. (For those who haven't had the experience, once one goes to seed you will battle them for the remainder of your existence!)

As I write this article I have just come in from a walk around our property observing all the ash trees that have died or are dying as a result of damage from the Emerald Ash Borer. It is really quite sad to see such beautiful, and in our case some very large, trees dying. This is all part of the curse that was put upon the ground back in The Garden and that won't relinquish its detrimental effects on the

Mother's Corner

by Ashlee Shoaff

Courage in the face of difficulties seems insurmountable at times. The Israelites were given the promise of a new land, one that they could finally call home (Joshua 1-4). When entering the territory, they were continually warned to stay diligent in seeking God and being bold and courageous as they faced obstacles. All through the thrilling expectation of a place of their own, God foresaw the need for them to remain faithful to the customs, heritage, and commandments He established with them and for them. When the time came for the Israelites to show their faith by crossing the Jordan River, specific instructions were outlined. First, they were given the general overview of what was to happen, an understanding that the time had come to begin ownership of the promise—to press forward, even against the odds. Then, the community as a whole was directed to sanctify themselves, to have the quality of holiness or purity worthy of the God who claimed them as His own. Finally, they were told to have faith as they entered the waters.

Action. Purity. Faith. Each is so much needed in parenting. Building relationships with our children and taking active steps to know them are key in helping them navigate through this life. Outlining how they can have a clean heart and loving actions as well as instilling in them the courage to rest on God's ability and trusting Him should be our ultimate goals for them.

Perhaps there are times when you feel you have a handle on parenting—when the textbook answers make sense and all your dreams of calmly sifting through family problems seems suitable. Ideals ignite us with hope, something common to following Christ—resting in hope. But, more often than not, the rubber meets the road and we feel inadequate. Is that the wiles of the devil or is it a gauge to measure our response? In 2 Corinthians 4:6-10, Paul says, *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not*

destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. He is the active ingredient when we face the trials of crossing a river or meeting the demands of parenting.

Days converge with a deep desire to handle escalating voices in a calm tone, answer the same question with gentleness, or encourage our children to clean with an enthusiastic glee. If you can't muster up all that you feel you should be, then reflecting on God's Word will inspire you. Action, purity, and faith are progressive steps in handling the barrage of problems you may be facing.

Action

Act on informing yourself of God's approaches to communication and discipline. Kenneth Thompson, in *Spiritual Emphasis Devotional*, noted the following regarding communication:

"The Bible says in Genesis 1 that we are made in the image of God. One way in which we are made in His image is found in our ability to communicate. God talks. False idols do not talk. Mere forces of nature do not talk. But not only does God talk, God talks to us. God communicates with His creation. This demonstrates God's love and concern for us."

Inferences about God's communication style is important. In Scripture, we see a variety of approaches. He communicated with direct instructions with Joshua as the above text states. He gave clear guidelines to live by before trouble had arisen. Additionally, He addressed discipline issues head on with varied consequences. We, too, can use similar approaches. Not all discipline problems should reap the same consequences. However, one act of disobedience should spur a conversation about our human desire of self-focus, why Christ went to Calvary, and how forgiveness restores your relationship with the child.

Purity

Take note, the Israelites were told to purify themselves before they

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What a Day cont. on page 5

Cookin' Corner

by Donna Starkey

1 Corinthians 10:31 says, *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

For a quick and easy meal try the following casserole. This is also an easy recipe cut in half if you are cooking for one or two. This recipe was given to me by Mary Kahn, one of the ladies in our church.

Enchilada Casserole

1 package El Monterey Beef and Bean Burritos or Chimichangas (8 serving size)
1 can (28 oz.) red enchilada sauce
1 can (31 oz.) refried beans
1 package (8 oz.) mild shredded cheddar cheese

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray 9x13 pan.

Cut burritos or chimichangas in half (makes easier to serve) and place in the pan. Spread the refried beans over the burritos. Cover with enchilada sauce and then top with the cheese. Bake for 30 minutes. Serve with shredded lettuce, tomatoes and sour cream.

For a delicious dessert try the following recipe from Margaret Tice.

Pina Colada Coconut Cake

1 Yellow Cake Mix (with pudding) Pillsbury brand
1 container (12 oz.) Cool Whip
1 can (14 oz.) sweetened condensed milk
1 can (14 oz.) of Coconut (Not coconut milk)
2-3 cups of coconut

Mix the cake mix per the directions on the box. Put in a Pam-sprayed 9 x 13 pan and bake per the directions on the box. When done, remove the cake from the oven and while still hot poke holes all over the cake being sure to go completely to the bottom. Pour the can of sweetened condensed milk all over the hot cake. Cool thoroughly.

Topping/Icing

Mix together the Cool Whip, cream of coconut and coconut. Spread on top of the cake and refrigerate. You can make this 2-3 days ahead as it get more delicious as it sets.

*If the 12 oz. container of Cool Whip is not available, you can use the 16 oz. size.

*If you like chocolate, you can substitute the yellow cake mix for a chocolate one (with pudding).

Hope you enjoy trying these recipes.

Donna Starkey is married to the Editor and lives in Miami County. She enjoys cooking, reading and spoiling her five grandchildren.



What a Day cont. from page 4

world until the end of this age. We could become quite despondent reflecting on this aspect of nature if we are not careful to keep afresh the hope of what lies ahead. Winter is a time of year when this proves to be especially difficult. A time when we are surrounded by death and lifelessness.

However, for me it has become a time when I experience great anticipation for the coming renewal of life that I know awaits me in the spring! I know that there is something better coming. I know that plants will grow again, flowers will bloom, birds will sing, and life will begin anew. What a great hope for our spiritual lives as well. To know that whatever pain and suffering we experience, whatever dire circumstances surround us, what-

ever hurts our hearts know, as the song by Jim Hill says, "There is coming a day when no heartache shall come, no more clouds in the sky, no more tears to dim the eye. All is peace forever more on that happy golden shore. What a day that will be when my Jesus I shall see, and I look upon His face the one who saved me by His grace. When he takes me by the hand and leads me through the Promised Land, what a day, glorious day that will be!"

Marlin Carpenter, a Master Gardener, operates Garden Gate Greenhouse at 500 S and Hwy 19 in Miami County. Stop by for all your gardening needs.
egardengate.com



Be a Mentor cont. from page 3

are they not getting the much needed exercise from physical play, but they also expose their impressionable minds to that which has been forbidden by their parents—violence, sexually explicit material, and obscene language. Some of these young people don't stay inside. Instead they roam around getting into trouble, including criminal behavior such as vandalism, underage drinking, shoplifting, and drug use. A mentor could teach them how to use their time constructively.

It used to be much harder for kids to get away with running around and wreaking havoc after school because everybody in the community knew each other and would gladly notify the offenders' parents of deviant behavior. But America's sense of community is nearly non-existent today. Neighbors hardly see one another, let alone know each other. People move so frequently that they never get a chance to put down roots and form relationships. Also, people often move away from their relatives rather than living a few doors down from them. A strong community is much like one big family. Parents have the support network that they need to help them raise their children, and children have the security of knowing that other adults care about them and are looking out for them.

Now that you have seen why America's kids are in crisis, I hope you will be brave enough to stand in the gap and make a difference. Start by exploring the mentoring opportunities available to you. Check out www.mentoring.org or www.bbsa.org to find out what formal mentoring programs are available in your com-

munity. Formal mentoring programs come in all shapes and sizes. They have different guidelines and require different time commitments. Read the literature available on the programs in your area and ask the representatives any questions you might have. Once you have made your decision, apply for the program. Personal references, a criminal background check, and an interview will all be a part of the application process. If a one-to-one mentoring program isn't right for you, look into group mentoring options, such as after-school programs. If your schedule is too erratic to make even a short-term commitment to a group mentoring program, e-mentoring may be an option.

If a mentoring program doesn't work for you at this time, that doesn't mean that you can't mentor. Open your eyes and look for the opportunities around you. Perhaps there is a child in your extended family or your church that could use some extra attention of a caring adult. Get to know your neighbors and their children. Perhaps they are far away from their extended family and could use a surrogate grandparent. Take advantage of the opportunities that you have to be around children. Smile at them. Speak to them. Treat them with respect and kindness. Demonstrate Christ-honoring behavior. They are watching you.

Jill helps with Truth Trackers at VBC and currently works in a public library. She has taught in a Christian school in England.



Thomas the Church Mouse

by Terry Seagraves

Hi, my name is Thomas and I live in a Church. Now it's not just any Church; it is a special Church. The reason our Church is special is because it is full of loving people. We have lots of room and we are always busy. You see, our Church has a school on the grounds and we mice do lessons when the children do. The great thing about living in a Church is we are never late for service and we never have to go out in the rain or snow.

I live with my Momma, Daddy, eight sisters and seven brothers. We have so much fun, and with a family as large as mine, we never get bored. Momma and Daddy always make sure we are up, dressed, and in our secret seats for services; no one even knows we are there. That's right, even mice wear their Sunday best clothes. My brother Daniel likes to sneak under the pews and if there are any children with their shoes off, he will use his tail to tickle their toes. Daddy gives him a good scolding for it, but he continues his little pranks.

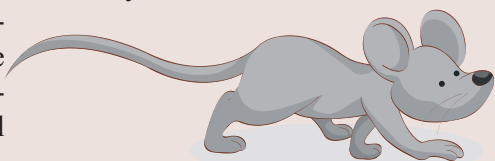
Daddy says we have to listen very closely to the messages because they teach us about our Creator, the prophets, and history according to God's Word. My favorite story is the Birth of Jesus. Every year during a season called Christmas, the people decorate the church building with a tree, lights and beautiful ornaments.

The people who come to our church care a lot for each other, and sometimes I get confused when I see tears in their eyes. Momma says that they are tears of true joy. I enjoy watching the children because they remind me of my own family.

Last night the ladies had a Christmas party and we got to watch; it was great. They had really good food, wonderful singing and exchanged gifts of love. They were laughing and sharing stories of their past Christmases. I can honestly tell you the food was great because we got to eat some leftovers, and I ate so much I got a tummy ache.

The best part of the party was when one of the ladies told the story of The Birth of Jesus. I love this story so much and would like to share it with you.

One night in a far off country a man and woman were traveling. It was very late and they needed to find a room. You see, the woman named Mary was due to have a baby anytime and her husband Joseph was very worried about her. After being turned away by several people, they finally found an innkeeper who was willing to let them spend the night in his stable. This part makes Momma really sad because she knew that



Church Mouse cont. on page 8

Old Timer's Corner

Balloon Adventure

I sometimes wonder if this column should be about old time things that happened long time ago, or if it should just be the ruminations of a true "Old Timer." Since I just celebrated my 80th birthday anniversary, I guess I've joined the ranks of true Old Timers! And if I tell you about an event of 37 years ago, maybe that will satisfy both requirements.

After seeing my first balloon, watching it hit power lines and burn up, I got a ride in Don Cameron's balloon at Indianola, IA at the BFA National Championships. I bought a Piccard hot air balloon in Hinsdale, Illinois in October 1976 after getting enough instruction to solo in it. I went back to LaCrosse, Wisconsin, where I lived at the time, and began my solo flying to achieve the hot air balloon private pilot rating on my commercial pilot certificate. My first solo flight was short and uneventful. My second was a white knuckle ride!

It started off gently enough. I was making it a Sunday School Promotion at Faith Baptist in LaCrosse, and I had waited for a calm day right after church. I had been told the reason they didn't fly balloons in the middle of the day was because it was too windy. Since I was already a flight instructor in airplanes, I was confident I could pick a day which would be calm enough for the balloon. The takeoff was a grand success; I even dropped Otis, a ventriloquist's dummy in a parachute from about 100 feet. The kids loved it.

I flew for an hour in the Mississippi Valley and then decided it was time to look for a place to land. The wind took me towards the 600 foot bluffs, so I burned enough to get over them, being helped by the updraft which was also climbing to get over the bluff. When I started down I was over a field whose owner was standing in it. I asked him between burns if I could land there, and he delightedly granted me permission. I descended towards the corn crib, and to keep from hitting

it, I gave a short burn. After leveling off, a strange thing happened; I made a left turn and started rising! I had not burned enough for this! I tapped the rate-of-climb indicator—500 feet per minute up! I should have been happy about this, getting free altitude with no expenditure of propane, but I had an uneasy feeling that something bad was happening. I tried to figure out what could go wrong. I had told my airplane flight students that if the aircraft was not doing exactly what they wanted it to do, they had quit being a pilot and had become a passenger. Now, I was feeling like a passenger! For five or six minutes I continued to rise, vacillating between elation and apprehension. I was uneasy,

feeling that this was too good to be benign. There must be a down side, but I couldn't think what it would be. I soon found out.

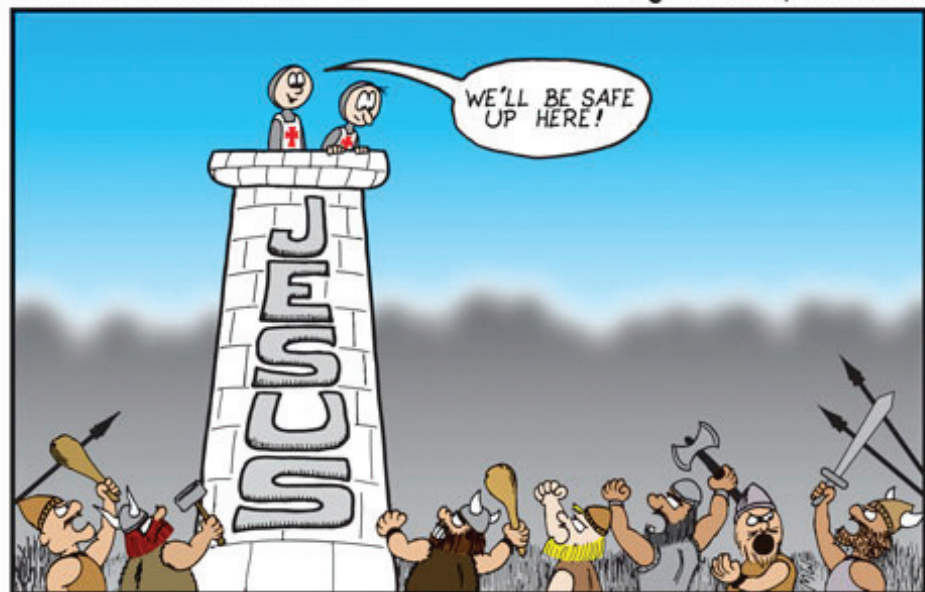
At 3500 feet I felt a jolt. That doesn't happen in a balloon. The basket hangs from the balloon perfectly still and quiet, moving right along with the air around it. There was no breeze, but now the basket was swinging wildly, and I had to take a wider stance to keep my balance.

At the same time I looked up and saw that the side of the envelop was bashed in, evidently from a wind shear, and I was dropping. I immediately tried to burn, but the wind across the swinging basket had blown out the pilot light. I whipped the bic lighter off that I had velcroed onto my jump suit and relit the burner. Tapping the rate-of-climb showed a descent of 700 feet per minute! Adjusting the three burners to maximum safe burn began to slow the descent only slightly. It had been so long since my last burn that the air in the envelop was now cold, providing very little lift, not nearly enough to slow me down before I hit the trees on the bluffs below me. Now I knew what could go wrong. I prayed, "Lord, I need some help. Please help me to think straight and do whatever is required to accomplish whatever You

Balloon Adventure cont. on page 10

A STRONG TOWER

A Joyful 'toon by Mike Waters



The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

—PROVERBS 18:10 KJV

© 2007 Michael D. Waters www.joyfultoons.com

FUN FOR KIDS (of All Ages)

Stuff to Ponder

- Tell a man that there are 400 billion stars, and he'll believe you. Tell him a bench has wet paint, and he has to touch it.

If it was only a 3 hour cruise, why did Mrs. Howell have so many clothes.

Why is it called a hamburger, when it's made out of beef?

Why does sour cream have an expiration date?

What's another word for synonym?
- If "con" is the opposite of "pro," then what is the opposite of progress?

How much deeper would the ocean be, if sponges didn't grow in it?

Why do we wait until a pig is dead, to "cure" it?

Why do we put suits in a garment bag, and put garments in a suitcase?

Why doesn't glue stick to the inside of the bottle?
- Do Roman paramedics refer to IV's as "4's"?

Whose cruel idea was it for the word "lisp" to have an "s" in it?

What do little birdies see when they get knocked unconscious?

Isn't it a bit unnerving that doctors call what they do "practice"?

When you open a bag of cotton balls, is the top one meant to be thrown away?
- Why isn't there mouse-flavored cat food?

Would a fly that loses its wings be called a walk?

If a turtle loses his shell, is it naked or homeless?

Why don't sheep shrink when it rains?

If vegetarians eat vegetables, what do humanitarians eat?

Old Testament Books

Unscramble these books of the Old Testament

- osma

- egsnsei

- uhkkabak

- mlasule

- iahagg

- vrpboesr

- shaeo

- ldiaen

- oejl

- talmetnsioa

- nhaoj

- zkleiee

- clhimaa

- thru

- acimh

- bnuresm

- naumh

- lsapms

- ohiabda

- aiisha

- ehraazchi

- mejrahei

- heapnzahi

- clesitvui

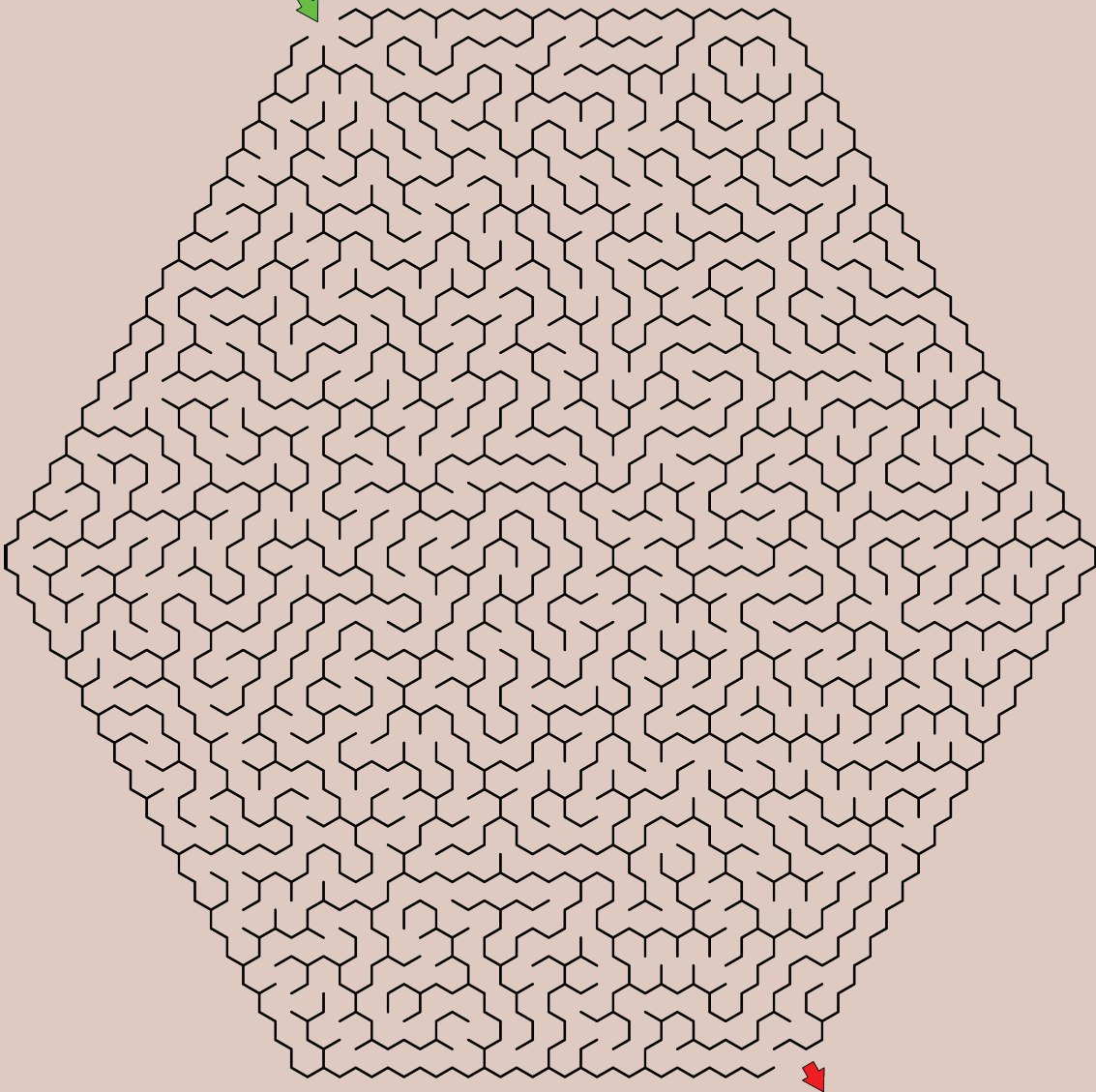
- theres

- raze

MAZE CRAZE

Intermediate Mazes by KrazyDad, Book 1

Maze #18



KRAZYDAD.COM/PUZZLES
Need the answer? <http://krazydad.com/mazes/answers>

A God of Miracles

by Steve & Amber Benedict

We have learned so much here on the field. One of the most important, scary, wonderful things we have learned (and are continuing to learn) is that God is completely trustworthy to meet each and every need we have.

For instance, this past month, the Children's Home deposit was five hundred dollars short. That is stressful, as the normal deposit is never enough to meet all of the needs, so the rest comes out of our personal support. But, on the other hand, we have enough to get us through not only today, but this whole week. I could sit around and waste my time worrying about how we are going to make ends meet for the rest of the month, or I can reflect on other times (many, many other times) that we have had a seeming lack of finances, but God has always come through. It is a really scary and exciting thing to wait and see the very hand of God supply in miraculous ways. And He never, not even once has failed us, no matter how impossible the situation seems.

Here's another "for instance." When we were brand new on the field here, we always had kids over in our yard playing with our kids. At meal-times I would send them home, feeling guilty because I knew that some of them might eat once a day, if that. But what was I to do? We were really, extremely poor, and I couldn't feed the neighborhood. Or so I thought. God put it on my heart to feed anyone who was at our house at meal time, and after arguing for a few minutes, I gave in. I told Him, "You'll have to make a way, because I don't have enough

money or food to handle this." The next day, Amber made up a pan of pasta, and I made up a pot of soup for the following day's lunch. At dinner time, the strangest thing happened. There was no one at our house. "Oh," I thought, "this is how God is going to handle things. He knows we are broke so He will just keep everyone away."

Just as we were sitting down to eat, we started getting knocks on the door. We had twenty-seven people show up, adults and kids, and that didn't even include our family of nine. I sent up a quick worried prayer, "OK, God, I told you we would obey; now it's up to you." I grabbed the pot of soup that we had planned for the next day along with the pasta, and we set out serving everyone. And serving. And serving. We served seconds to almost everyone, we served thirds to quite a few, and even sent food home for members of our visitors' families that weren't there to join us. And the food never ran out! We still had enough left over for our lunch the next day. It is very easy for me to picture the feeding of the five thousand. Maybe it wasn't five thousand that showed up at our door, but it was the same type of miracle that we personally got to be a part of.

We have seen many miracles here. One time a government agency showed up out of the blue to do an inspection, which started a relationship that a few months later helped us with our immigration status. We were worried in the beginning, but God had a

God of Miracles cont. on page 9

Sudoku #8

Intermediate Sudoku Puzzles, Volume 3, Book 13

5	1		8			2		
			7	1				
		8			5		9	
		1	3					
	6		1	4	7		8	
					2	3		
	4		2			5		
				8	3			
		9			4		6	3

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Church Mouse cont. from page 6


Mary really needed to be in a warm bed.

There were a few animals in the stable and they made room for the family and their donkey. It was very cold out and the animals did their best to keep everyone warm. During the night Mary gave birth to a beautiful baby boy; they named him Jesus. He was to grow up and be a very special man for the human race.

We love celebrating Christmas. My family gives gifts but we do things a little different than humans. You see, we make all our gifts and we each make a gift for Jesus. It is a special time for us because we get to have our family together and share in the story of Christ and tell what our gifts mean to us.

This year, I made Baby Jesus a box for Blessings. My brothers and sisters did not understand why I would make a box for Blessings so I explained. "Every day God blesses me and my family, and I want Jesus to know that I see and feel a blessing every day. So each night before I go to bed, I write down how God has blessed me that day and put it in my Blessing Box. I don't open the box again until next Christmas, and then I get to read how God has given me gifts all year long." Daddy smiled at me and Momma gave me a big hug. She had a tear in her eye and I knew

she was proud of me. I also enjoy making gifts for my family because they know that each gift was made with love and I love my family so much. I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and a special Church to celebrate the best gift any human or creature can receive. I have written a poem and I hope you enjoy it as I finish my story.

There was a Baby born on
Christmas Day
The purpose of His birth was to
give His life away
I cried to my Momma, I wish I
were a man
So I could praise and worship the
Son of God and of man
I would sing Hallelujah, Praise God
and bow my head in prayer
I would pray for all lost souls...
everywhere
I would tell the story of Jesus the
Savior, how his blood
Was shed for me and them
And I would smile and be thankful
I know Him
And shout 
Happy Birthday Jesus
And Amen



Terry lives with her husband in Howard County and teaches a children's class at Victory Baptist Church.

Did You Know?

- Did you know 11% of people are left handed?
- Did you know a bear has 42 teeth?
- Did you know an ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain?
- Did you know most lipsticks contain fish scales?
- Did you know 8% of people have an extra rib?
- Did you know 85% of plant life is found in the ocean?
- Did you know rabbits like licorice?
- Did you know the Hawaiian alphabet has 12 letters?
- Did you know reindeer like bananas?
- Did you know a cat has 32 muscles in each ear?
- Did you know frogs can't swallow with their eyes open?

God's world is so interesting!



Lessons From Little Ones Check Your Attitude

by Brenda Howard

One day, a 3-year-old girl and her mother were walking to the grocery store to pick up a few things. As they were walking home, the little girl began to fuss and complain and display a general bad attitude toward everything. After several attempts to reason with the child, the mother finally told her that when they got home she would get a spanking unless her attitude changed. The little girl replied, "You don't have to, I'll do it myself!" Right there on the sidewalk the little girl bent over, swatted herself on her back side a couple of times, straightened up and said, "There! And I did it hard!"

The little girl's mother was pleased to report that her daughter's attitude had indeed changed, and she had returned to being her pleasant little self. No further correction was necessary.

How often do we find our own attitudes in need of change, though the solution may not be quite as simple as the one the little girl in my story found! When Paul wrote to the church

at Philippi he told them about the kind of attitude that ought to be displayed by a follower of Christ:

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross (Philippians 2:3-8).

Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear



as lights in the world (Phil. 2:14-15).

Don't be selfish? Look out for the needs of others? Be humble like Christ? Be a servant? Don't grumble or argue? How contrary to our own natural desires! How contrary to the world in which we live! In today's society these attitudes are thought to be weak; yet God says that if we display these attitudes we will appear as lights in the world. This sin-darkened, suffering world so desperately needs the light that only God can give.

Are we willing to be lights in this world? Are we willing to change our attitudes to be more like Christ? Are we willing to "empty ourselves" and let Christ's love be displayed through us to those around us?

Let's check our attitudes and share the light of God's love!

Brenda and her husband, Bruce, live in Kokomo, Indiana. They have one married daughter.



God of Miracles *cont. from page 8*

plan. We had a bread truck show up and unload so much bread that we were able to share it with the community. Someone showed up with cleaning supplies, such as laundry soap, softener, general purpose cleaner, etc. We see God sending finances the very day we need them, and many other things also. But the biggest miracles of all are when we see God pluck children out of bad situations, put them here in our Children's Home, save them and change their lives forever. How wonderful it is to see this greatest miracle of all.

We truly do serve a God of miracles, a God that loves to show His ability to care for us and mold us into exactly what He wants us to be. The hard part is not His; the hard part is ours. We have to trust Him to do what He says He will do. And when we do, we will see His hand provide in miraculous fashion, without fail, because He is faithful.

Steve and Amber Benedict, along with their children, have been missionaries in Mexico since 2003. Visit their website at benedictbunch.com.



The Fundamentals *cont. from page 1*

power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, Jesus did not inherit a sinful human nature which has cursed everyone throughout history. This is critical. If this were not so, Jesus would have died for His own sin, not the sin of the world.

That leads us to the next point which states another necessary fact. Jesus was the only Person to ever live a perfect life. He never sinned, not even once! He even had brothers and sisters tempting Him just like most of us. He was even pure in His thought life. See the end of the previous paragraph for this point's importance.

Not only was Jesus Himself a miracle, He performed miracles. He actually healed people of all types of ailments. Yes, the lame walked, and the blind were able to see! He had total control over every aspect of creation, both physically and spiritually. He even brought the dead back to life. By the way, we believe God can still work miracles today.

However, the central theme of the entire Bible is found in the next two points: the substitutionary death and bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ. God's punishment for sin is

death. Everyone is a sinner by birth and by choice. Therefore, everyone is condemned to death. That is the bad news. The good news is that Jesus voluntarily died on the cross for the sins of the entire world since He did not have to die for His own sin. He was able to pay the price God's justice demanded. God can declare you free from the penalty if you will simply repent of your sins and accept Jesus' payment on your behalf. It's the bargain of the ages. I know my death would have been for the payment of my

sin, but I am simply trusting Jesus' death to pay that price and give me eternal life based on Christ's work at Calvary, not on anything I have done.

The resurrection of Jesus is the high point in history. Jesus' death on the cross didn't transform the lives of His followers, His resurrection did! As a matter of fact, they were cowering in fear after His death. They led a worldwide religious movement after

they saw the risen Savior.

The resurrection is proof there is life after death. Hundreds, if not thousands, saw the resurrected Lord. This event is the reason we have our western culture. Throughout the Book of Acts you see accounts of the impact the resurrection had on people. Has the empty tomb made the life-changing impact God wants it

to have on your life?

The Bible goes on to teach us that Jesus ascended into Heaven after His resurrection. Jesus Himself told His disciples

He had to go to His Father and prepare a place for us to be together for eternity. The Bible never goes into detail about where that is, how long it will take, or exactly what He is doing to prepare that place.

The final point of the third fundamental is Jesus promised to return to take us to be with Him. The Blessed Hope is that we will get to spend eternity with Jesus and all the

Either He was Who He claimed to be, or He was the greatest fraud the world has ever known.

saved throughout history in a perfect environment happily forever after.

It is no wonder this Jewish carpenter turned teacher is still intimidating so many people after two thousand years! Face it. Either He was Who He claimed to be, or He was the greatest fraud the world has ever known. He made some outrageous claims. He told His followers He would be killed then come back to life after three days. He actually claimed to be God! Multiple millions over multiple centuries have laid claim to the promises He made and accepted Him as their personal Lord and Savior.

Have you accepted Jesus' sacrificial death as the payment for your sins? Please do!

I hope you have found this article helpful. I plan on dealing with the issue of salvation and the meaning and purpose of life in future issues.

Matthew Turner is principal of Victory Christian Academy and co-founder of the Kokomo TEA Party. Contact Matt: vcamatt@yahoo.com.



Aging Gracefully

"Making A Mark"

by Morris Starkey

My youngest brother and I were recently at breakfast discussing, as usual, a variety of things when our discussion turned to our purpose for existence. I was reminded of my college days of the 1960s. I lived in a campus dorm in a room with a guy from the isolated hills of eastern Tennessee. He never went to a public school until he was nine years old. A brilliant young man, he went on to graduate from course work at the prestigious Oak Ridge National Laboratory. He never purchased a text book, took notes or intentionally studied for a test. He graduated with our class earning honors. He was the kind of guy most of us would hate, but I really found him enjoyable company. Possessing the eccentricities of many intellectuals, he could recall nearly everything he heard in a lecture hall. He often helped me correct or improve my lecture notes.

Sitting in our room one evening, discussing the same subject my brother and I were now discussing forty-five years later, Harvey said, "I hope I don't die, never having made a mark." I have thought about his statement all these years. What my friend was talking about was leaving a legacy. Not an epitaph, which is merely words inscribed on a tombstone, which may or may not reflect how one truly will be remembered, but a legacy. A legacy is what is real and true of us. It may or may not have tangible substance. The better legacies often don't. A good legacy is comprised of what my pastor calls, "the priceless intangibles." A good legacy doesn't need to achieve broad recognition. It may only be acknowledged by our family and a close circle of friends and acquaintances. While it is the "little things" in a relationship that count, it can be similarly true of the legacy we leave.

In my sixty-nine years I have attended many funerals. My purpose in doing so, I will admit, varied. Some were family, some were friends and some were individuals with whom I was not on the best of terms. My reason for attending the latter wasn't just a verification of the deceased one's condition, though it seemed a plausible reason at the time. In every case a deceased person has left a mark, a legacy, for good or not so good. Their name may not be on a hospital wing, a foundation to help mankind, or the subject of media acclaim. They may have lived simple lives, or, conversely, saw all these achievements realized; they still leave a legacy for good or bad.

What will be our legacy? Do our children and grandchildren know what we believe about God and how to please Him? Have we pointed them toward heaven, or have we, by word and example, pointed them toward hell? Do they know we love them or have we cultivated a cold and unloving relationship without tenderness, compassion and mercy? Will we leave them assured of our eternal destiny, or will we leave them with questions of our and their spiritual future?

It's our legacy we are going to leave, shaped by our choices. We *will* make a mark. It is incumbent upon us to choose well and "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:14). May our legacy show we lived **Grace**fully.

Morris Starkey is retired from Indiana University Kokomo and lives with his



wife, Donna, in Miami County. They have two children and five grandchildren.

Marriage Destroyers from page 1

ness, unchecked, leads to resentment, and resentment, unchecked, leads to hatred. *Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled* (Hebrews 12:15). Bitterness is turning sour towards someone. In Hebrews 12 it is the Lord. In a marriage it is the spouse. Resentment paralyzes any marital relationship. It serves as a catalyst for distance, lack of communication, and bitterness between spouses. If you want a relationship filled with bitterness, plant the seed of resentment and nurture it with an unforgiving spirit.

An unforgiving spirit taints future problems. If we do not keep current in dealing with problems as they come up, the old unforgiven problems cause even more resentment when new problems arise. Start every day with a clean slate. You must deal with and forgive all that is in the past! *Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: ²⁷ Neither give place to the devil* (Ephesians 4:26-27).

An unforgiving spirit is entrenched in pride. "They wronged ME!!" I will not forgive them for what they have done to ME! They will have to beg MY forgiveness, and even then I don't know if I will forgive them. Pride-filled people write off others who offend them.

In his book, *The Gift of Forgiveness*, Charles Stanley writes,

Forgiveness is "the act of setting someone free from an obligation to you that is a result of a wrong done against you." For example, a debt is forgiven when you free your debtor of his obligation to pay back what he owes you.

Forgiveness, then, involves three elements: injury, a debt resulting from the in-

jury, and a cancellation of the debt. All three elements are essential if forgiveness is to take place. I believe most people who suffer from an unforgiving spirit do not know that unforgiveness is the root of their problem.

A person who has an unforgiving spirit is always the real loser, much more so than the one against whom the grudge is held. Unforgiveness, by its very nature, prevents individuals from following through on many of the specifics of the Christian life and practically necessitates that they walk by the flesh rather than by the spirit.

The destructive nature of an unforgiving spirit is such that it is not limited to one relationship. Resentment and other negative feelings spill over into other relationships. This is the second reason a person with an unforgiving spirit loses out on life (pp. 3-4).

Most importantly, unforgiveness affects your relationship with God. *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered* (1 Peter 3:7). *And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses* (Mark 11:25).

Mike Ennis serves as Pastor of Victory Baptist Church. A native of Kokomo, he has pastored for 30 years. He and his wife, Joan, have 4 married daughters and 8 grandchildren.



Balloon Adventure cont. from page 6

have in mind."

I had always told my flight students, "I can't tell you about all the problems you're going to encounter, and how to solve them. So the best I can do is to try to teach you to think, and figure out what can go wrong, and then, don't let it!"

Now I have to put my advice into practice. OK, what can go wrong



now? First, if I can't stop before I hit the trees, the edge of the basket could hit a strong branch, tip and dump me out 60 or 80 feet from the ground. Don't want that! So, that's what these big rope loops in the middle of each edge are for! I wrap my left hand in one of those. Now let's see, if I hit the trees, ripping and damaging the balloon, maybe breaking some of the supporting load tapes, having over burned by then, the wounded aircraft

may pop back into the air and break the rest of the supports at one or two hundred feet. Again, I would die at the end of the fall. Don't want that either. So I reached out and got hold of the red rope that rips out the top for landing. I thought if I smash through trees and see damage, then I'll start ripping out the top and let it stay right there in the forest. At least I won't die this Sunday afternoon. But I was still dropping and the burners were

going full blast and the trees were approaching. Oh, I'm out of space again. I'll have to finish my story in the next issue.



Jim Wright earned his MA in Engineering from Oklahoma State, is a Certified Flight Instructor, and is retired from EDS. Jim is a Deacon at Victory Baptist Church.

The Book Shelf *cont. from page 3*

unmarried are called to purity, and married women may someday find themselves single again. Remaining pure before the Lord at such a stage of life is just as important as in the teen years.

Another statistic that Ezra Klein cites in his blog from the *Knot Yet* report is the sky rocketing of co-habitation. Indeed our society's reluctance toward marriage has fostered a "try it out" mentality. Certainly many young people have cause to be cautious having seen the breakup and disintegration of their own parents' marriages. How can they know that the partner they choose is "the one" and that their own marriage will last?

In his book *The Sacred Search*, published by David C. Cook, Gary Thomas addresses this dilemma as he writes, "The reward for making a wise marital choice is so tremendous that I don't want you to miss it. The consequences of making a foolish choice can be so painful and lasting that I don't want you to have to endure them" (p. 19).

Thomas begins with the assertion that the "why" of marriage is more important than the "who" of marriage. He cites Matthew 6:33—"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you" (NKJV)—as the basis for the home and marriage. He debunks the idea of a one and only "soul mate" (a concept which originated in Greek philosophy) and instead invites his reader to search for a "sole mate"—someone who will walk with him or her on the spiritual journey of life.

Thomas explores the idea of "being in love." He says that when

women email him about their husbands, it is almost always about character issues. Yet when most women are seeking a man, they do not put character first. They are looking for someone with whom they feel "in love" (p. 43). Thomas emphasizes that "just because you're 'in love' with someone doesn't mean you should seriously consider marrying them" (p. 26).

Throughout the book Thomas discusses the many pitfalls of marrying the wrong type of person, as in his chapter "Problem People," or marrying for the wrong reason, as in "You're Looking for a Complement, Not a Clone." "The person you marry is the person you're going to be married to. [Many] fall for a person's *potential*, thinking that the person they're marrying is going to change into someone who is substantially different" (p. 160).

Thomas writes in a conversational style with many stories and life examples from his counseling, speaking, and pastoral experiences. Each chapter concludes with study questions that encourage the reader to rethink and apply the material.

This book is an invaluable tool for helping a man or woman on the sacred search of a mate. Although one might be tempted to feel that searching for a mate Thomas' way is too daunting, one must agree with him that we need to choose wisely for the sake of the kingdom of God.

Jeanine Garrison lives in Clinton County with her books and her husband Tim. The couple has three grown children.

**Breast Cancer Awareness** *cont. from page 3*

advise monthly self-breast exams. It is important that you do this the same time monthly, but not when menstruating because breasts can be tender and swollen during this time. I have found these five steps from www.cancer.org that will guide you through the process. Keeping it simple will help make it easier to do. Set a reminder in your phone.

Step 1: Begin by looking at your breasts in the mirror with your shoulders straight and your arms on your hips.

Here's what you should look for:

- Breasts that are their usual size, shape, and color
- Breasts that are evenly shaped without visible distortion or swelling

If you see any of the following changes, bring them to your doctor's attention:

- Dimpling, puckering, or bulging of the skin
- A nipple that has changed position or an inverted nipple (pushed inward instead of sticking out)
- Redness, soreness, rash, or swelling

Step 2: Now, raise your arms and look for the same changes.

Step 3: While you're at the mirror, look for any signs of fluid coming out of one or both nipples (this could be a watery, milky, or yellow fluid or blood).

Step 4: Next, feel your breasts while lying down, using your right hand to feel your left breast and then your left hand to feel your right breast. Use a firm, smooth touch with the first few finger pads of your hand, keeping the fingers flat and together. Use a circular motion, about the size of a quarter.

Cover the entire breast from top

to bottom, side to side — from your collarbone to the top of your abdomen, and from your armpit to your cleavage.

Follow a pattern to be sure that you cover the whole breast. You can begin at the nipple, moving in larger and larger circles until you reach the outer edge of the breast. You can also move your fingers up and down vertically, in rows, as if you were mowing a lawn. This up-and-down approach seems to work best for most women. Be sure to feel all the tissue from the front to the back of your breasts. For the skin and tissue just beneath, use light pressure; use medium pressure for tissue in the middle of your breasts; use firm pressure for the deep tissue in the back. When you've reached the deep tissue, you should be able to feel down to your ribcage.

Step 5: Finally, feel your breasts while you are standing or sitting. Many women find that the easiest way to feel their breasts is when their skin is wet and slippery, so they like to do this step in the shower. Cover your entire breast, using the same hand movements described in step 4.

If you notice any changes consult your doctor immediately. Please do not be alarmed, many times these turn out to be something benign, but it's still better safe than sorry. I should also say that breast cancer is possible in men as well, although much less common. You can find information on the web regarding this.



Rachel Irwin is married to Justin and has two children. She is a practicing RN in Howard County.

Mother's Corner *cont. from page 4*

were to claim any victories and feel their heritage pressed beneath their feet. They had to shed all reliance on themselves. Much like we need to do as parents. Current trends heavily emphasize a child's feelings. Though emotions are cues in understanding and communicating internal responses, they should not dictate your responsive relationship with your children. In correction or investigative conversation our intention should incorporate the need for purity and a desire for righteousness. *For it is written, 'You shall be holy, because I am holy'* (1 Peter 1:16). Matthew

Henry's Concise Commentary states the following about holiness:

"Be [clear-headed,] be watchful against all spiritual dangers and enemies, and be temperate in all behavior. Be sober-minded in opinion, as well as in practice, and humble in your judgment of yourselves. A strong and perfect trust in the grace of God, is agreeable with best endeavors in our duty. Holiness is the desire and duty of every Christian. It must be in all affairs, in every condition, and towards all people. We must especially watch and pray against the sins to which we are inclined. The written word of God

is the surest rule of a Christian's life, and by this rule we are commanded to be holy every way. God makes those holy whom he saves."

Faith

To interweave God's holiness into our chats with our children and to lead them to purity before they battle temptations of the world are essential. We must train their minds to know the difference between purity in their thoughts and deeds, in their leisure

and entertainment, in their worship and self-reflection.

Just as the Israelites claimed, by faith, their homeland, as parents we must faithfully submit our perspectives and parenting practices to our God. We must trust in His ability to conquer our upcoming battles. Not only ours, but our children's too.

Ashlee and her husband, Stan, have four children. She is currently working on an advanced degree, lives in Howard county and serves our Lord at Victory Baptist Church.



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God's Simple Plan of Salvation

The Bible says there is only one way to Heaven.

Jesus said: I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me (John 14:6).

Good works cannot save you.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Admit you are a sinner.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

Be willing to turn from sin (repent).

Jesus said: I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish (Luke 13:5).

Believe that Jesus Christ died for you, was buried, and rose from the dead.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life (John 3:16).

But God commendeth [demonstrated] his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved (Romans 10:9).

Through prayer, invite Jesus into your life to become your personal Saviour.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Romans 10:10).

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved (Romans 10:13).



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