

Zion's Advocate

*"And blessed are they who shall seek to bring forth my Zion at that day,
for they shall have the gift and the power of the Holy Ghost;"*

1 Nephi 3:187

VOLUME 73

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NUMBER 2

That ye would listen unto the word of his commands, and let not this pride of your hearts destroy your souls.

Think of your brethren, like unto yourselves, and be familiar with all, and free with your substance, that they may be rich like unto you.

But before ye seek for riches, seek ye for the kingdom of God.

—*Jacob 2:21-23*

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Zion's Advocate is ...

To promote Jesus Christ as our only Saviour;
To promote His Teachings & His Church, the Church of Christ;
To be a voice of warning to His people; To be Zion's advocate.

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Word Processors/Computers: We can utilize text files on an IBM® or compatible computer floppy disk of any size or format and nearly any word processor. If you have this capability, it is a *big* help to our process.

STATUS OF PUBLISHED ARTICLES

Articles published in this paper do not necessarily reflect the teachings of the Church nor the opinions of the editorial staff.

Declarations and notices authorized by the General Conference reflect the practices and beliefs of the General Church.

ARTICLE

Blessed are the Pure in Heart

By Elder Arthur G. Smith

Matthew 5:8: "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."

In a study of the teachings of Jesus Christ to His chosen twelve disciples we are made aware of the pure and holy nature of our Lord. His gentle yet authoritative manner was effective but simple. He came to complete the work to which He was sent by the Father, a plan of salvation for all mankind. With the wisdom of the Holy Spirit within Him, Jesus prepared them for the monumental task of building the Kingdom of God with simple truths and sound doctrines. These truths and the doctrines of the gospel of salvation have endured, and we are invited in these last days to participate in the blessings of the Kingdom.

Of all the necessary qualities of a good servant of God none is equal to the need of a pure heart. Without this attained goal of righteousness, or holiness, there is little hope or any promise of fruitful service, for it is required of the servant to be close to God and the Holy Spirit. Sin is the curse that separates us from our God. No

sin can rest in the servant's heart who would have the Holy Spirit to dwell with him. Jesus required the utmost of the disciples when he spoke, "*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*" Matthew 5:48.

There is no way to be perfect without a pure heart, and our scriptures teach this as a principal basic fact. Our Lord would not have required perfection if it were not possible, and we are to do what is needed to arrive at that spiritual condition. There is more needed than just a simple acknowledgement or an oral statement of belief in God and Jesus Christ as the means of being saved in the Kingdom of God. As Paul the Apostle wrote, "*Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection—*" Hebrews 6:1. He continued to enumerate those principles of the doctrine of Christ and these we must do. Then we are engaged in the battle of our soul to be Godly; to purify our hearts that becomes a life-long battle as we are tempted again and again to sin.

David wrote in Psalm 24:3-5:

"Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who

Of all the necessary qualities of a good servant of God none is equal to the need of a pure heart.

shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."

We have no hope of seeing or having an association with God or the Holy Spirit unless we are repentant in this life. We are required to seek forgiveness of our sins and sin no more. We must have faith in God, keep the commandments, be baptized for the remission of our sins, be baptized with the Holy Spirit and purify our heart and strive to become perfect. Otherwise we will only meet God at the judgement day.

We look at these promises of the words of the Lord and realize that the call to holiness is applicable to everyone. Apostle Paul admonished us to, "*Follow peace with all men, and*

holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" Hebrews 12:14.

We think the time is not too far away when we shall see Him coming. The signs of the last

No sin can rest in the servant's heart who would have the Holy Spirit to dwell with him.

days are all around us in the world. So it is with a sense of urgency that we are to prepare our hearts, for only you and I know what is in our hearts that could deny us the promised blessing.

It has always been the object of the worship of God to be in communication with Him, for He is a living God who has spoken to us from the beginning of time through His servants, the prophets. Without a form of communication we are in the darkness of our lost condition that was pronounced on mankind from the day of Adam. The form of communication we all have is prayer, and He has promised us that our hearts poured out to Him in prayer is heard and answered. This is the only way we can purify our hearts; our confessions of sins and petitions for forgiveness will work to the salvation of our soul.

Our Lord spent much time in prayer and fasting, and that sets before us an example of

what we can do. The Lord thought it a proper way to communicate with the Father, and He was blessed with the Spirit. He sought comfort in the hour of agony of Gethsemane through prayer. We can do no less, and we, too, can experience the comfort of the Holy Spirit.

The disciples were in the company of our Lord in person, and He could teach them face to face. There would shortly be a time when He would be taken from the earth and they would be left with the promise of His return. They also had the promise of the Holy Spirit to be given them after the Lord was gone away into heaven.

They were to remember these lessons and principles in later times and teach them to the church. Paul wrote, "*Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*" 2 Corinthians 7:1.

Peter also encouraged holiness in our hearts: "*But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy*" 1 Peter 1:15-16.

There is the blessing promised that we shall see God, and His Glory, if our hearts are pure. The curse that afflicts us all is the sins we fail to purge from our hearts. We are promised that there will be a time when the curse of sin will be no more.

John, the beloved apostle, had a great vision of the end

time as recorded in Revelation 22:3-4:

"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb

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shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."

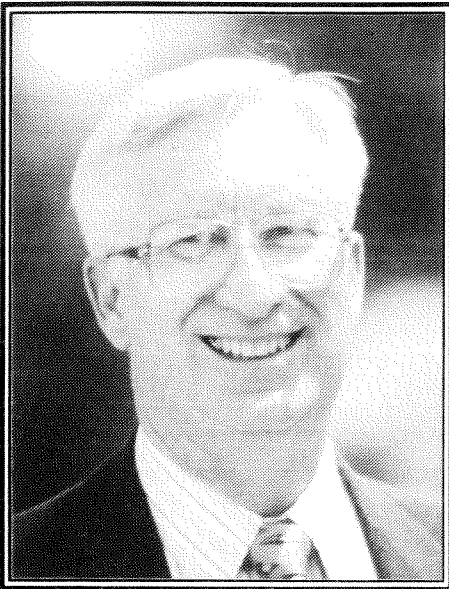
All things are possible with God. He is faithful in all things promised us and He will not fail. He is merciful and forgiving and loves us when we are obedient and faithful.

Let us offer Him our hearts pure and undefiled. With love to our brethren and sisters, let us be forgiving and merciful, lifting the burdens of the heart and spirit that it might be well with us in the day of judgement.

ARTICLE

The Avoidance Of Sin

(Leave No Room For Sin)



By Elder Glenn Gill

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" Rom 3:23. *"For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been, from the fall of Adam, and will be, for ever and ever;"* Mos 1:119.

Sin comes from within ourselves, arising from the natural instincts with which we were born. But God calls upon us to be more than animals; to grow, mature and leave behind our

original view of ourselves as the center of the universe; to stop expecting that others must serve our demands, attend to our feelings and give us comfort and happiness. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: *"When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things"* I Cor 13:11.

When a child learns to nurture and care for the body God has provided and to develop talents that will serve to glorify God through praise, thanksgiving and righteous living, that is proper stewardship. However, the child often learns to manipulate and control so that responsibilities are avoided, blame becomes shifted to others, and carnal pleasure frequently becomes the primary objective of his actions. This often happens when children lack guidance and do not have loving, righteous role models in the home. Such a person learns to direct his actions selfishly: governed by how he feels, without thought for the feelings of others. The desire to possess

The avoidance of sin is an act of the human will and it doesn't just come naturally.

and manipulate others will stunt spiritual growth and gradually become a sinful way of life. Charity will be shut out and the fruit of the spirit will not be born in that life. *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts"* Gal 5:22-24. To the extent that one is self serving and directed by "how I feel," "how I think things should be" and "what they should do for me": to that extent the fruit of the spirit will be prevented from developing in ones life, and with that lack will come a lack of resistance to sin.

"But if he yieldeth to the enticings of the Holy Spirit,

and putteth off the natural man, and becometh a saint, through the atonement of Christ, the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father" Mos 1:120.

Notice that the Scriptures speak of two kinds of "child." One (the meek and submissive) is to be cultivated that we might mature spiritually. The other, however (the self centered and brash), is to be "put away." This process of spiritual maturing is essential in our lives if we are to avoid sin.

"Wherefore take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:" Eph 6:13-17.

The avoidance of sin is an act of the human will and it doesn't just come naturally. The way to cultivate love, joy, peace

and all the other fruit provided by the indwelling of God's Spirit in our lives is easy to see in this quote from Paul's letter to the Ephesians. And its desirability over the wages of sin is undisputed. Each person must willfully put on those pieces of armor. Paul said "take unto you." This is not something that just happens to you or that others can do for you. It is something that each person wills to do for himself. We are instructed to "take" the helmet and the sword. The sword is the word of God. And Paul said "Yield to the enticings of the Holy Spirit": an active, willful surrender of self. Joy (true happiness) comes to us by no other means.

In this world of sin we are being told constantly that it is good to take care of "number one"; that it is how we feel that counts; that self esteem depends on feeling good about ourselves, etc. The armor and sword are needed so that we can be constantly reminded that real self esteem comes from inviting the fruit of the Spirit to shine forth from our countenance.

God is in charge. The earth was formed at his spoken word. And at his word it can be rolled up as a scroll. We were made for his pleasure, not him for ours. *"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" Rev 4:11.* We serve God's pleasure by our righteousness and glorify His

name by rightly using the talents and substance He has provided us. Bearing these truths in mind at all times and willfully acting upon His commandments; wielding the sword of the Spirit, reflecting in our lives the pure love of Christ (charity); this way—this positive, active "growing up into—Christ" (see Eph 4: 15) is a way of life that will leave no room for sin. The fruit of the spirit can not coexist with sin. If we have one we will not have the other. The choice is ours.

If we fall, God has provided repentance that by the blood of Christ we can recover and once again pursue the righteous course. But we must remember that sin comes from the carnal man within ourselves, while the fruit of the Spirit comes from God. We must call upon God and align ourselves with his will. If we make this choice God himself will fill us with the strength we need to overcome sin. When we provide the will to live as the Word of God teaches us to live, God will provide in us the power to overcome. *"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" Rev 21:7.*

ARTICLE

THE BIBLE AND USURY



By Harvey E. Seibel

"By usury is generally understood in the Bible any interest on a loan whether in money or in wheat or other commodities. Modern usage has confined the meaning of the word unlawful interest" (Cruden's Concordance).

"According to the unanimous teaching of the old theologians, usury consisted of any interest that was exacted by the lender from the borrower solely as the price of the loan... Those who lent money at three per cent were committing usury quite as really as those who lent it at forty per cent..." (The Church and

Usury, by Rev. Patrick Cleary, p. v).

When the children of Israel came out of Egypt the Lord laid down a multitude of rules or laws concerning human conduct. One of these concerned the lending of money. We read, *"If thou lend money to any of my people that is poor by thee, **thou shalt not be to him as an usurer, neither shalt thou lay upon him usury**" Exodus 22:25.*

The implied thought here is that usury, though forbidden to be taken of the poor, may be collected from the not so poor. This thought seems to be strengthened in Leviticus 25:35-40:

*"And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. **Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase.** I am the Lord your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, to give you the land*

...If the taking or the giving of usury will prevent one from being able even to dwell in Zion, then it is certain that Zion cannot be redeemed through the increase of usury.

of Canaan, and to be your God. And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee..."

It would appear that though God does not look with favor upon the taker of usury it seems not to be specifically forbidden in all cases. One may do so in certain circumstances but not with God's specific permission. Rather, this principle no doubt comes under the law of "do unto others as you would be done by." Or, as we find it given in Ecclesiastes 11:1-2, *"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou*

shalt find it after many days. Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth."

In Deuteronomy 23:19-20 God lays a more definite stricture upon the people of God:

"Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury: Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to in the land whither thou goest to possess it."

Here the charging of usury is absolutely forbidden unto all except the stranger. The stranger obviously must have reference to those not of the household of God, that is, not the house of Israel, but rather, the nations round about them. This thought is strengthened in Deuteronomy 15:6:

"For the Lord thy God blesseth thee, as he promised thee: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, but thou shalt not borrow; and thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee."

Thus *"The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender"* Proverbs 22:7.

Perhaps if we desire to be

perfect we would do well both as a church and as individuals to forgo the putting out of our money to usury or interest.

Consider Psalm 15:1-5. Here a pertinent question is asked: *"Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?"* (verse 1). The answer is given:

"He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not. HE THAT PUTTETH NOT OUT HIS MONEY TO USURY, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved."

In effect, this very definitely tells us that if we would dwell in Zion (God's holy hill) we must not be guilty of putting out our money to usury.

The modern Babylonian economic system under which the world struggles today is based upon usury, debt and speculation. This system is designed for the eventual impoverishment of the whole world and its resultant subjugation. The demise of the present economic system will result in the mark of the beast and total financial en-

slavement. Then will come a more complete fulfillment of the time in which they who labor in Zion shall labor for Zion and not for money lest they perish.

The evils to which the practice of usury leads is demonstrated in Nehemiah 5:1-4,6-7:

"And there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews. For there were that said, We, our sons, and our daughters, are many: therefore we take up corn for them, that we may eat, and live. Some also there were that said, We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth. There were also that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, and that upon our lands and vineyards.... And I was very angry when I heard their cry and these words. Then I consulted with myself, and I rebuked the nobles, and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them."

So Nehemiah rebuked them and required of them the discontinuance of this wicked practice and to restore every man that which was his:

"And I said unto them, We after our ability have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye

even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer. Also I said, It is not good that ye do: ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God because of the reproach of the heathen our enemies? I likewise, and my brethren, and my servants, might exact of them money and corn: I pray you, **let us leave off this usury.** Restore, I pray you, to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive yards, and their houses, also the hundredth part of the money, and of the corn, the wine, and the oil, that ye exact of them. Then said they, We will restore them, and will require nothing of them; so will we do as thou sayest. Then I called the priests, and took an oath of them, that they should do according to this promise. Also I shook my lap, and said, So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise, even thus be he shaken out, and emptied. And all the congregation said, Amen, and praised the Lord. And the people did according to this promise" Nehemiah 5:8-13.

In Proverbs 28:8 God equates usury with unjust gain: "He that by usury and unjust gain increaseth his substance, he shall gather it for him that will pity the poor."

But when the time of God's judgment shall come and his wrath begins to be poured out upon the earth as we find recorded in Isaiah 24 then neither the taker nor the giver of usury will be spared:

"And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him" Isaiah 24:2.

When destruction was prophesied against Judah a promise of deliverance was given to one who had not engaged in usurious practices:

"Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me. The Lord said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil and in the time of affliction" Jeremiah 15:10-11.

God promises life to them that neither take nor give usury, to the one who deals justly.

"But if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, And hath not eaten upon the mountains, nei-

ther hath lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither hath defiled his neighbour's wife, neither hath come near to a menstruous woman, And hath not oppressed any, but hath restored to the debtor his pledge, hath spoiled none by violence, hath given his bread to the hungry, and hath covered the naked with a garment; **He that hath not given forth upon usury, neither hath taken any increase,** that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, hath executed true judgment between man and man, Hath walked in my statutes, and hath kept my judgments, to deal truly; he is just, **he shall surely live,** saith the Lord God" Ezekiel 18:5-9.

On the other hand God promises death to one who indulges in usury, for he says, among other things, that those who give forth upon usury and take increase thereby shall surely die. See Ezekiel 18:10-13. But those who see to the needs of the poor and do not receive usury and do justly in all things shall surely live. See Ezekiel 18:14-17.

Among the list of the many wicked practices enumerated by God concerning Israel in Ezekiel is the taking of usury:

"In thee have they taken gifts to shed blood; **thou hast taken usury and increase,** and thou hast

greedily gained of thy neighbours by extortion, and hast forgotten me, saith the Lord God. Behold, therefore I have smitten mine hand at thy dishonest gain which thou hast made, and at thy blood which hath been in the midst of thee"
Ezekiel 22:12-13.

What about the scriptures in Matthew 25:27 and Luke 19:23 concerning the slothful servant who buried his talent when he should have put it into the bank so that the Lord could have required his own with usury? This parable is speaking of spiritual matters using earthly things to illustrate the point. Secondly, the increase would have been the Lord's, not

the servant's, as is the case in earthly things. But from the book, *The Church and Usury*, we read the following statement:

"There is indeed a reference to usury in the parable of the talents, but from the context it is quite evident that Christ has no intention of making a pronouncement on the morality of any economical doctrine; he simply utilizes the prevailing practices of the Roman bankers to point a moral on co-operation with divine grace" (page 32).

So what is the bottom line for us in these matters? We have, since the beginning of this

great work, looked for the redemption of Zion. Each passing generation hoped they would see it in their day. No doubt the errors that crept into the church in the early days contributed to the failure of this hope then. Yet, today, one thing is evident: if the taking or the giving of usury will prevent one from being able even to dwell in Zion, then it is certain that Zion cannot be redeemed through the increase of usury. To do so is, in effect, an attempt to build up Zion through unrighteous gain, a thing which the laborer in Zion is forbidden to do.

Announcement

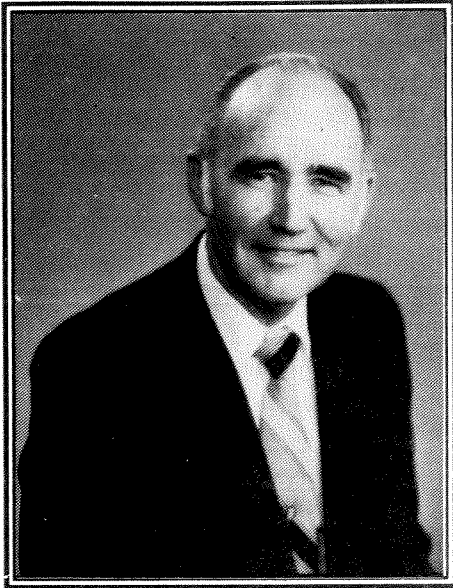
There has been a vehicle fund set up for Elder and missionary Ken Oar to aid in his work on the Navajo Nation. Donations should be made out to the Church of Christ and mailed to Meredyth Malone at 2701 E. Utopia, #33, Phoenix, AZ 85024.

This vehicle should help Brother Oar to be nearly self-sufficient in his work on the Reservation. Up to this point he and others that have gone with him have had to rent a motel or stay at the K.O.A. We have already purchased a fully self-contained camper, but his truck (a 1/2 ton)

will not haul the camper's weight. Our goal is to sell his present truck as soon as we can locate and purchase a 3/4 ton truck that will haul the camper. This should benefit the general church by saving several hundred a month that can be put to other uses.

OUR VITAL HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS: PART 5

THE DUTIES OF CHILDREN



**By Apostle
Donald McIndoo**

A number of years ago Evangelist Placido Koyoc, of Yucatan, had a spiritual experience regarding certain things about which the church should be praying. There were eight of these matters of great concern. One of them dealt with the responsibilities of children to their parents and to God. Another was about the duties of parents toward their children. These two areas of

important responsibility shall complete our study of our vital human relationships within the family of God.

We will begin with the simpler subject, the duties of children to their parents and to God. I would like to try to gear this study directly to you young people. Parents, you will have to accommodate, if you so desire, this study to your younger children.

For a text we shall use the words revealed by the Holy Spirit to the Apostle Paul:

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth” Ephesians 6:1-3.

You can easily see that there are two distinct commandments here; we are to both obey and respect our parents. God has told us that this is a commandment with a promise attached to it. What is this promise? God has promised that if you remember to do these

two things your personal life will be happier, more secure and content, and also our nation will be stronger and blessed.

But let's get right down to brass tacks: You may think that you do love and respect your parents but wonder just why you should always have to obey them. You may think to yourself, “They really lay down some pretty unreasonable rules, rules I am supposed to follow, but most of my friends don't have to. That isn't fair! And some of those rules are really out of date, like sort of out of the past, and things aren't like that any more.” Well, you've made some pretty good points there, and we need to address them. Just why should you learn to “obey your parents in all things” as it says in Colossians 3:20?

In John 14:23 Jesus told us, “If a man love me, he will keep my words.” This shows us clearly there is a definite relationship between obedience, love and respect. You can't truly say you love and respect your parents if you don't obey them any more than you can love Jesus without obeying His words. Right in your home you

can develop an understanding of respect for a higher authority at the most basic level, a respect for your parents. If you fail to do that, you will probably never learn to respect teachers, rules, laws of the land or even God's rules, for you would have already broken one of His first commandments. Such a person is in for a life of problems, difficulty and stress. These are the kinds of things your parents want to help you avoid.

Now let's consider those out-of-date rules our parents lay down for us. As members of the Church of Christ, God is asking your parents to make rules for their family which are based upon God's laws. Even the basic laws of our nation and the laws of your state are based on this Judeo-Christian heritage which comes to us from the holy scriptures. It is certainly true that our world is different today: In your schools you may be learning about "safe sex," you may be taught to be tolerant of homosexuality, you may see your high school and college friends using drugs, having weekly drinking parties; you may hear all kinds of profanity in the movies and on TV, and it all seems to be acceptable to the majority of people. But is it acceptable to God?

Our God has told us in Malachi 3:6, "*For I am the Lord, I change not...*" The morals, customs and the practices of men change from generation to generation, but God never changes. What about His commandments; can they be

changed? In Isaiah 40:8 we are told that the things of the earth do change, "*The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever.*" And so the rules that a Christian lives by can never

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change, and that makes them seem outdated to the modern people of the world. This is one of the hard choices you have to make: Are you going to please God, or are you going to please the people who are living in the world? In James 4:4 we are told that friendship with the world is enmity with God. We each have to make that choice!

When you were two years old, what did you know about life and its many dangers; about the road, electricity, fire, germs or poisons? Well, nothing really. Listening to and minding your parents is all that kept you alive until now. In Proverbs 22:15 we are told, "*Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child...*" By foolishness it means a curiosity, a desire to try out everything, a certain recklessness and fearlessness, and, of course, the desire to be independent. Now, all those qualities can be benefi-

cial, but they can also be very dangerous. In general, the people around us, the environment we live in, our toys, our tools and equipment are all much more dangerous than they were fifty years ago.

Life can be full of joy, happiness and adventure, but it is also filled with thorns, bruises and snares. Your parents' job is to help you find the former and escape the latter. Their major desire is to see you live a happy and secure life. Satan wants you to be miserable, even as he is miserable, and so he tries to ensnare you, to deceive you. He wants teenagers to be angry, to ignore their parents' counsel, to be rebellious. This isn't anything new. Listen to God's words as He describes the children of Israel 2,800 years ago: "*...this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the Lord...*" Isaiah 30:9.

Your parents' main responsibility is to help you escape that misery. Let's consider a former professional football player, all-pro defensive end, Luis Sharpe. This year he has lost his job, lost his friends, lost his family, is addicted to alcohol and drugs, has been in and out of jail, recently got shot and then was committed to a psychiatric ward. Released to go to court, he failed to appear and there is now a warrant for his arrest. Even more sadly, that same picture of misery is being replayed a thousand times every day somewhere in our nation. People with all kinds of talents, intelli-

gent people, people with every advantage, are falling into captivity to Satan. Many times their journey to destruction began right in their own home as they chose to ignore their parents' instructions.

Only by the inspiration of God can a person know what lies ahead in our future. God wanted believers to know about the last days before the Lord would come again for His people, for He said that they would be "perilous times." He wants us to know about them so that we can be prepared for the dangers we must face and make the right choices. So God described our day in II Timothy 3:1-5. And right in the middle of the description we find that many will be "disobedient to parents." So this is one of the real dangers you must be on guard against. It is God, Himself, who has warned you.

How would you kids like to go to a party some night, show up and find yourself sitting in a room full of murderers and assassins? That would be pretty scary; I don't think any of us would feel very comfortable in company like that. What if you planned to meet your friends in a bar some weekend, got your directions mixed up and walked into a gay bar where you were the only straight person present? I just imagine you would like to make a quick exit. We really don't feel comfortable in the company of murderers, homosexuals, liars, boasters and traitors do we? But that is exactly the same kind of company

in which God places young people who are disobedient to their parents. Read Romans 1:29-31 and see for yourself. And verse 32 says that people "which commit such things are worthy of death."

Young people, do you really wish to be pleasing to God, so that one day you can dwell in His presence? The scripture gives us an easy formula to start us on the way. Let's read it in Colossians 3:20: "*Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.*"

When Jesus was twelve years old we discover in Luke 2:51 that he "was subject" unto his parents. This simply means he was obedient to them. In the next verse we read the only commentary in the entire Bible about His years as a teenager, and we can see the results of His obedience: "*And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.*" This, young friends, is what your parents wish for you; that as you mature, you will grow in wisdom, you will find yourself in favor with God and respected by all good men and women.

The Price

Happiness is often bought
With the coin
Of pain;
Garden flowers only bloom
After snow
And rain!

February's icy breath
Seems remote
From spring;
But in just a little while,
Nesting birds
Will sing.

Many times we're tired out
From the ache
Of seeking;
But from every shadowed
place,
God's own voice
Is speaking!

Happiness is dearly
bought
With the coin
Of sorrow;
Winter ushers in the
warmth
Of a gay
Tomorrow!

—Margaret Saupster
Submitted by Sister Vida Filley

PATHLIGHTS

My Personal Religion and Tithe



Tithing has been in my vocabulary and my life as long as I can remember. The fact that 1/10th of all I earned was God's was never questioned. That is not to say that I've always obeyed. When I was a child, my mother saw to it that I complied, but as I left home and had my own family expenses, there were times when I did not do as I'd been taught. Our expenses were so heavy and income so small that we couldn't afford "God's share." Finances would go from bad to worse until I would come to my senses and go back to paying my tithe first,

then doing the best I could with what was left. For some reason there always seemed to be "enough." Again I would become negligent and find myself not being able to manage income and outgo because I found excuses not to pay my "tenth" first. Until I finally learned what came "first" on my expense list I continued to have my failures.

One day I went to church in Phoenix after I was widowed the second time, with only \$1.50 in my funds. I thought, "I won't give anything today because I can't." In Sunday School we were asked to turn to a scripture to study. My Bible fell open to Mark 12:42-43 and these words leaped off the page at me: "And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples and sayeth unto them, This poor widow hath cast more than all they who have cast into the treasury." Needless, to say, I did give my money that day, not knowing how I would buy my next groceries. And wouldn't you know, my sister came to church that day with huge bags of produce from their farm. I did not go hungry!

One of my mother's oft-quoted verses, and one of my favorites is Malachi 3:10:

"Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." !!

Meredyth Malone



LOCAL NEWS

COLLINS, MISSOURI

The snow is beginning to melt today, January 8th, and if the temperature can hold up as has been forecast, perhaps it will all be gone by the end of the week. I'm sure all the folks that work out doors will be appreciative of that. The last couple weeks of December and the ushering in of 1996 have been cold and snowy days. Though it's hard to get around in, I personally have enjoyed part of it. We have a bird feeder in our backyard, and to watch the beautiful colors of all those different birds against the white snow as they rush in to have their dinner is like nothing else. The bright red cardinals perched on a snow covered branch and the sassy blue jays trying to bully the others—they're all a treat to watch.

November 19th, a wedding reception was given for Gabriel and Leigh Ann Yates at the home of Dennis and Olivia Yates—Gabe's parents. We had opportunity to meet Gabe's lovely bride and wish them well in their life together.

December 3rd was a happy day at our local as Timothy Stephen Eddy, son of Bob and Wanda Jo Eddy, entered the waters of baptism. He was baptized by his father, which was, to me, a wonderful thing. The laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Ghost was done by Brother Allen Kauffman and

assisted by Brother Jack Martin. The hand of fellowship was extended with many hugs and happy tears. You know how this feels, don't you? After you've hoped and prayed and waited and watched for someone to come to the understanding of their need to serve God and to finally make that covenant with Him, you can't help but rejoice with tears.

Our community celebrations of Thanksgiving and Christmas have been enjoyed again. We have, perhaps, an unusual community in that we can celebrate given holidays together without fuss over our "differences" and preach to one another about Jesus Christ and how thankful we all are for His goodness and how important it is that we live right and do good to one another. I hope it can always be so.

We have had colds and the flu among several of us. Roma Harrison has had some rough days with his asthma, coupled with the flue, and has not been able to attend church for a Sunday or two. When Roma can't come to services, we know he's pretty sick. Johnny Mathis has been down sick for a while also, but is up and about again and able to bring his good singing voice to church. We always enjoy hearing him sing. Jo Eddy is to report back with her doctor in Omaha this week to be checked over again.

Sharon (Eddy) Gough got a

few together to surprise her mom (Jo) with some Christmas caroling one night before Christmas. It was so much fun, and Jo put in all the pretty harmony while we sang for her.

I will leave you with a few sermon quotes to consider:

- ◆ Sometimes we are lulled away into thinking we're not in a warfare, but we are—a spiritual warfare—against the world.
- ◆ God is a merciful God—He will forgive our sins, but He won't tolerate them.
- ◆ Be willing to be used.
- ◆ Is our faith strong enough to go out and do whatever God would have us do?
- ◆ Have you counted the cost to serve the Lord? There is a price people pay and we're paying it if we DON'T serve the Lord.
- ◆ What better gift could be given? ...that we might have salvation.

*Your reporter,
Czerna Kauffman*

CHURCH OF CHRIST CONFERENCES

The 1996 Ministers' Conference (general membership) for the Church of Christ will commence Sunday, March 31. The business sessions will start at 9:00 A.M. Monday, April 1. A Solemn Assembly will be held prior to the conference, on March 29 & 30. All services will be held on the Temple Lot.

The 1996 Ministers' Conference (priesthood membership) of the Church of Christ will be held Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, August 21 through 23, at Independence, Missouri.

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