

Preface

This book has been designed for free distribution, whether online or in print and contains a collection of Bible studies and poems meant to Glorify God.

Messages were addressed to one or more of the following: Glory to God Bible Study, an e-mail Bible study and reading program <<http://welcome.to/GlorytoGod>>; Teenz4theLord "Inside Out" online youth group, which typically meets weekly for prayer, Bible study, and fellowship <<http://www.teenz4theLord.com>>; or Jesus is Waiting online forum and chat <<http://forums.delphiforums.com/jesusishere>>. Hyperlinks are accurate as of the writing date and may be updated as the Lord allows in the future.

For the Seeker, I pray through this book you are pointed to the Lord and Savior of the world. For the Believer, I pray you are encouraged through all aspects of this book. For the Skeptic, I pray you are shown before death that Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords (Master of masters) and have the life more abundantly that He promised to those who believe and follow Him!

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"Three Key Bible Revelations"

By Sterling Franklin

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

The Bible is much more than a simple book. It's the Book that shows us more about God Himself, shows us how to live Life the way God intended and teaches us how we can be Born Again by the Grace of God.

2 Peter 1:20-21

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

40 authors, 66 books, all centering on Jesus Christ. This book is still the #1 Bestseller and is the #1 Bestseller of all time.

Translated into thousands of dialects, and currently being translated into over 400 other dialects for the first time, this book shows us the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Hebrews 4:12 - "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

People have taken effort in printing this Book in mass, splitting up the text into chapters (1189) and verses (31,173), and translating it so that many more might enjoy the Gospel.

1 Corinthians 1:18 - "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God."

God's Word is often offensive to those who don't believe. It's the best book that anyone will ever put together, and joy and peace can be obtained by its overall author - God.

The Bible shows us a ton of things. First of all, God opens up the door to His Mind so that we can enter in and discover some of what He is like and what He wants us to be.

I. The Bible Reveals attributes of God

As you read through each page of the Bible, you realize more and more how God has reached down to man out of true Love.

Even though we have messed up along the way - messing up by falling into temptation and sin, failing to obey the Old Covenant, rebelling against Him by sinning - He still offers us eternal Salvation through His Son.

Just looking at Psalms, we see a great deal of Praises written through the hands of mainly King David, and other singers such as Asaph, displaying and highlighting some amazing attributes of God...

a) He is Good and Faithful with His Word:

Psalm 100:5 - "For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations."

b) He hears our prayers:

Psalm 102:7 - "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer."

c) He satisfies us and protects us:

Psalm 23:1 - "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want."

d) He guides us, uses us, and sustains us:

Psalm 23:3 - "He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

e) His ways are just, He is compassionate and merciful:

Psalm 24:8-10 - "(8) Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way. (9) The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way. (10) All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies."

f) He is worthy of our Praise, our utmost Exaltation, and is Holy:

Psalm 99:9 - "Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy."

God sent His Son that we might live - and the ultimate sign of Love was shown - the Cross.

Romans 5:8 - "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

2 Corinthians 5:21 - "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

He was innocent, yet MADE guilty, that we would become the righteousness of God in or 'through' Him.

Therefore, the Bible has shown us what He did for us. It's up to us to accept what He offers us - Salvation.

2 Timothy 3:15 - "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

II. The Bible Reveals how we can be Saved from what we deserve

The Bible is wonderful! The Good News of Salvation is here! Jesus Himself has bore our sins, died on the cross, and rose again so that we might Live not a boring old hopeless life, but LIFE more abundantly (see John 10:10)!

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

If you were hanging from a ledge of a cliff, dangling 5,000 feet off the ground with no ground in between, would you cry out for the help you need and be pulled up onto the firm and safe ground of earth?

We are in the same situation: if we haven't asked Jesus to be our Savior yet, we are dangling from a cliff. We are not guaranteed tomorrow, and if we don't have Him as our Savior, we are dangling from that cliff, a mile above the ground. If we let go, we die. However, if we have Jesus to pull us out of the trouble and to forgive our sins, we are on a firm foundation - the Rock of Ages, Jesus Christ!

There is *hope* and there is *nope*. Without Him, it's *nope*. With Him, it's *Hope*, and not Hope in Vain, but an Everlasting Hope.

Ask Jesus to be yours today if you haven't already. Choose Life, and Life Everlasting.

If you want Him in Your Life, pray this prayer with me...

"Dear Jesus, be my Savior today, forgive my sins, cleanse me, make me whole. Thank You for Your work on the cross, dying and rising again that I might Live! Let me please You, Jesus, and thank You for Saving me. In Jesus' name, Amen."

That's how to inherit Life eternally in Heaven – not by a recitation of a man-made prayer, but by the heart to follow God and the commitment to follow Jesus.

Romans 10:9 - "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." Amen!

III. The Bible Reveals How to Live this Life

Psalms 119:4 - "Thou hast commanded us to keep thy precepts diligently."

What a lot of people don't consider is that God **COMMANDED** us to follow His Laws. The Tablets Moses was given by God on Mount Sinai did not infer "Ten Suggestions", but "Ten Commandments."

His heart is for our best interests. If we follow His Commandments, He will bless us richly. If and when we disobey His commandments, we sin.

The benefits of sin are only for a season, but then the consequences come. Guilt and strife are felt and retributions are usually in order for those whom you have offended.

We are no longer slaves to sin once Saved. Paul even says in Romans 6:2, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

If we all obeyed God's Word perfectly, revival would take place, and everyone would be at peace with one another.

Such a statement rings true, 'No Jesus, No Peace; Know Jesus, Know Peace.'

God in the Old Testament is sometimes referred to as Jehovah Shalom - The Lord our Peace. When Gideon was afraid of the battle to come, God revealed Himself as Jehovah Shalom, and Gideon was settled. He even made an altar to God which said "The LORD is Peace." (see Judges 6)

In a general sense, when we please God, He gives us His Peace. Even when trials arise, as they will, when we trust in Him, His Peace is with us. "God

is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." (Psalm 46:1) Thank the Lord for that attribute!

1 John 3:4 - "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

Sin comes from an archery term, meaning to miss the mark. If somebody shot an arrow and missed the target, that was 'sin.'

Likewise, we miss the mark when we disobey God's commandments. We all sin, because all fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23) and if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the Truth is not in us (1 John 1:8).

Even more shocking: in 1 John 1:10, it makes known, if we say that we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar, and His Word is not in us! We obviously know that this cannot be since God has never lied and will never lie. He keeps His Word, Glory to God!

Jesus commanded us in the Sermon on the Mount,

Matthew 5:46 - "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Now you may think, 'What an outrageous request!!!' But...the Holy Spirit is our Sanctifier, and He brings us closer and closer to that request. We are to be ever-perfected in Love, and we are not to fall back, but to strive forward for the mark of the high calling in Christ Jesus!

Even though we are imperfect beings and stumble in our Walk, He is faithful and just to forgive us of all our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Though we may stumble as Christians, we will not fall.

Psalms 119:1 - "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD."

One of King David's earnest pleas found in Psalm 119: "O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments." (verses 5-6).

The Bible has often been described as 'Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth' (B.I.B.L.E.). The Word of God is a road map of how to live life correctly.

We can live a life of power, and it's through Jesus Christ. Through the Bible, through Prayer, through Sharing the Gospel with others.

We are more than conquerors through Him, He will supply our EVERY need according to His Glorious Riches, and we can do ALL things through Him!

Psalm 119:11 - "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

The more of the Bible we consume, the less prone we are to sin. We are putting on the full armor of God when we use His Word in our lives.

Ephesians 6:11 - "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

If we are Saved, we have Jesus' Blood covering us, and His Word Strengthens us.

Get your Belt of Truth, your shoes of the Gospel of Peace, your Breastplate of Righteousness, the Sword of the Spirit, your Shield of Faith, and your Helmet of Salvation and meet me at the corner! We are battling principalities in Jesus' Name, coming to tear the devil's kingdom down!

Joshua 1:8 - "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."

...and the promise in verse 9...

Joshua 1:9 - "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

We must share others the Love of Christ in our daily lives, also. We cannot fathom how deep the love of Christ is, but we can share what He's revealed to us, even Saving us! What a miracle that is!

Even though we deserve hell due to our sin, He allows us into Heaven through Him! No regrets, just Jesus.

We need to keep in the Word of God and find out what it actually says and means. Good doctrine is what all Christians should have, no matter what denomination church they go to. The Body of Christ has a lot to do about witnessing the Truth of Jesus Christ.

Titus chapter 2 talks a lot about good doctrine. Old men are supposed to be sound in Faith, and Young men good in doctrine. Old women are supposed to teach the younger women how to live according to God's Word, that it isn't blasphemed.

Titus 2:1 - "But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine:"

Prayer before reading the Bible is key, also. Pray that the Holy Spirit shows you what is in a passage, and things will click. However, we don't have this power of Discernment without the Holy Spirit, and that comes upon believing in Jesus as your Lord and Savior!

Thank the Father for all His Wonderful gifts - "Every good and perfect Gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of Lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17)

The Bible is Wonderful! Pick it up today! When you ask Jesus to Redeem you, there will be no regrets! Glory to God! Amen.

"Yet we Left Behind our Horse"

By Sterling Franklin

Though we knew our destination,
We forgot about our course,
We went running with the saddle,
Yet we left behind our horse,
And instead of us progressing,
We were standing still instead,
We had forgotten that our Faith
Without the works was simply dead.
Yet the Lord, Who loves us dearly,
And want ALL to come to Him,
Gives Wisdom to the foolish,
And He brightens up the dim.
His Kingdom will not perish,
It is there for you and me,
If you ask the Lord to be your Savior
And to forgive your sins Sincerely.

"How Great"

By Sterling Franklin

How Great is Your Day,
How Great is Your Peace,
When You return to this earth,
And all quarrels shall cease.
How Great is Your Power,
How Great is Your Might,
That can change the most vile,
Transforming darkness into Light.

How Holy are You,
And How Worthy You are,
To receive all our praises,
Dear Bright Morning Star,
How Awesome Your Presence,
And how Infinite Your Grace,
With Love as deep as the ocean,
Yet as delicate as lace.

How great it truly is
To serve a Loving, Caring King,

And to You I will give my heart,
My time, and my everything.

"No Longer"

By Sterling Franklin

No longer blind,
No longer worried,
We have our Path in full sight.
No longer cursed,
No longer threatened,
For the Lord our God is our Light.

No longer wandering,
No longer lost,
The Lord has plans for our Days.
No longer in want,
No longer in need,
He Provides for us in all ways.

“All Charges Dismissed”
By Sterling Franklin

A few weeks ago, I was in a pretty mild, yet widespread accident. Seven cars total were involved, two bumping in the left lane, two bumping in the right lane, and three in the center lane. I was merging into the center lane from the left lane, and I saw the truck in front of me basically just stop instantly. I slammed on my brakes, but it was too late...

I had to go to court as a result of this accident since I rear-ended the truck in front of me, and I would be guilty of the fault for hitting the truck in front of me. I was for sure not looking forward to this visit. Since justice is often corrupt, I expected them to maybe even pin more blame on me than I really had.

So I went to court and stood in line to be judged. I printed up a handout for the judge to look over, but the guy at the door simply asked me for the Insurance letter (proof I had it), and then simply said, "All Charges Dismissed."

POWERFUL WORDS, THOSE WERE! After I left the courthouse, my mother and I talked. The courtroom situation that went on is just like what the Lord Jesus Christ will do at His Judgment Seat to those who have accepted Him as Savior.

Although the basis of the words "All Charges Dismissed" in the court on earth was simply the apathy of the courtroom to take action, and even a bit of corruption, the basis in Heaven for similar words will be Perfect Love and Mercy, given to those who have their name in the Lamb's Book of Life - those who have accepted Christ as Personal Savior.

In this lesson, we will study how Jesus issues acquittal to our sins and how powerful this acquittal actually is.

One quick example of the power of this acquittal is where Jesus heals the man sick of the palsy (shorter term for paralyzed, that is, his nervous system stopped functioning in some parts), accounted in Matthew 9 and Mark 2.

Jesus was preaching to a great crowd in Capernaum, and so many people were interested that they overcrowded the house where Jesus was. Imagine this: Nobody could even enter through the door!

A paralyzed man lying on a bed was brought to Jesus, but he couldn't get into the door, so they opened up the roof, and four friends lowered him into the room.

First thing Jesus does is say "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee" (Mark 2:5), and many of the scribes thought that Jesus was being blasphemous.

Mark 2:8-11 - "(8) And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? (9) Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? (10) But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) (11) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house."

Think of this...people today can be used of God to heal people through His Power, but Jesus alone can forgive sin.

I. What we did

- Simply enough, we all have sinned.
Romans 3:23 - "23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

If you have ever told a lie, taken something ('borrowed forever without them knowing' = stealing), thought unwholesome thoughts toward another person, or even put yourself in focus above God, CONGRATULATIONS! You are human! We all are guilty of sinning.

Take for example this conversation:

Rhonda: "Have you ever sinned, Pete?"

Pete: "Nope"

Rhonda: "Hey, Pete...1 John 1:8 – 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.'"

Pete: "DRAT! FOILED AGAIN!"

Everyone has sinned, even the most mature Christians (I'm not talking about Pete!).

- The penalty of this sinning is death.
Romans 6:23 - "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

We all deserve eternal separation from God, meaning hell, but God is patient with us, and is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

This brings us to what God did to bridge the gap between imperfect man and Perfect God...

II. What He Did

Imagine that you have only one son (if you have even one, more power to ya!). What if you had to give up your only son because everyone else did something awful? You would be DEVASTATED!

John 3:16-17 - "(16) 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. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved."

God gave up His Only Son, Jesus, because we all were sinners. He paid the price, and all we have to do is accept Him to receive eternal Life in Heaven.

The now-famous Praise Chorus "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High" (originally written by Rick Founds) has a great chorus. Here's a line-by-line overview:

"You came from Heaven to earth to show the way"

Jesus came to earth, taught us how to live our lives pleasing to God, and His Words remain recorded in the Bible.

"From the earth to the cross, my debt to pay"

Jesus died for the payment of our sins on the cross. We remember this day that He died by 'Good Friday' (usually in April - ☺ I was born on Good Friday!)

"From the cross to the grave, from the grave to the Sky, Lord I lift your name on High"

Jesus was buried in a tomb bought by Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man of the area. Three days after his death on the cross, He rose again from the dead, walked the earth and proved He was God, then went up to God the Father in Heaven to be at His Righteous Right Hand. He will return sometime in the future (very soon, I believe, based especially on events in the last 20 years or so).

This entire set of events is also recorded in 1 Corinthians 15:3-6. Jesus gives an account of His resurrection in Revelation 1:18...

Revelation 1:18 - "18 I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

He conquered death and hell by His resurrection.

III. Our Loving God wants us to come to Him

As stated in 2 Peter 3:9, God does want us to come to Him. He is a loving God, not a brutal slave-master.

Romans 5:8 - "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

1 John 4:8b - "for God is love."

If you remember in John 3:16, it starts out with the words "For God so loved the world."

He is a loving God. Notice that He sent His only Son for us out of love.

This 'love' in all these cases comes from the word 'agape' (pronounced ag-ah'-pay and written 'αγαπη'). This type of love is Spiritual, unconditional, and unending. The Lord loves us much more than we can love anybody else.

Think of one thing on this earth that you REALLY love. God can top that by a factor of infinity!

John 15:12-14

12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

Jesus laid down His Life that we might gain Life – through Him!

John 15:16 – "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and [that] your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

IV. Do we want to come to Him?

I will give two invitations in this section and one in the last section to accept Christ if you choose to...

Salvation is a choice, and if you want to accept Christ as your Personal Savior, Praise the Lord! That is even a gift of God.

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

If you want to accept Christ right now, and you can pray the following prayer sincerely, pray the prayer and know that you are a child of God and are promised eternal life in Heaven for accepting Him...

"Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for loving me. I am sorry for the sins I have committed and ask You now to be my Personal Savior. Thank You for dying on the cross and shedding Your blood for the payment of my sins and rising again from the grave three days later. Thank You, in Jesus' Name, Amen."

(Just a side note, you don't have to pray EXACTLY those words. These prayers are a general guideline of what you need to believe and confess to have a true understanding of the Faith in Jesus Christ.)

Accepting Christ as Personal Savior is the best decision you can make in this lifetime.

Revelation 3:20 - "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

Anyone who asks the Lord to be their Personal Savior will receive Him.

John 1:12 - "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"

...and...

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

If you ever desire to become a born-again Christian (born-again = spiritually, not physically (see John 3)), the Holy Spirit is drawing you to Christ, and you should be obedient and accept Him as Savior.

According to Romans 10:9, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be Saved. That simple! It must be sincere, however, for God knows the heart.

Again, if you want to accept Christ right now as your Personal Savior, and you can ask Him into your life and know that you are a child of God and are promised eternal life in Heaven for accepting Him...

"Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for loving me with Your Awesome Love. I am a sinner and am sorry for the sins I have committed and ask You now to be my Personal Savior. Thank You for sacrificing yourself on the cross and shedding Your blood for the payment of my sins and rising again from the grave three days later. Thank You, in Jesus' Name, Amen."

V. What Will Happen to those who Accept Him?

Revelation 3:21 - "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."

We will SIT WITH JESUS?!?!?!?! That is AWESOME!!!!!!! I am going to be both extremely excited and in complete awe (I would guess we all will 'fall as dead' just like Daniel and John when they saw Him) when I get to meet Jesus! Yes, I need to do more on this earth for Him (Lord Willing), but when I meet Him, I certainly won't be disappointed!

If you have believed in and accepted Him as your substitutionary Sacrifice for your sins, your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Anyone found in the Lamb's Book of Life will be with the Lord in Heaven for eternity - a place of perfection.

Revelation 20:15 - "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."

It's either Heaven or hell. Again, a choice. If you don't want God in your life, He won't force you to be with Him for eternity. If you reject Him in front of men, He will reject you in front of the Father. Eternity without God happens to be hell, which is a place of eternal torment - with weeping and gnashing of teeth (see Matthew 8:12). Jesus preached more about hell than He did Heaven, and warns us...

Matthew 10:28 - "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

This world is full of garbage, and I'm not just talking about landfills.... People treat others unfairly and unkindly, stresses pile up, and so on and so on. In Heaven, none of these imperfections will exist! ZIP, ZERO, ZILCH, NADA will be imperfect in Heaven!

If you want to accept Christ right now as your Personal Savior and inherit eternal Life in Heaven through Him, and you can pray the following prayer

sincerely, pray the prayer and know that you are a child of God and are promised eternal life in Heaven for accepting Him...

"Dear Lord Jesus, I accept You as the Eternal Sacrifice for my sins. Forgive me for all the disobedience I've committed against You and lead me on the strait and narrow path that leads to Eternal Life. I am Yours, and You are my King and Savior. Thank You, in Jesus' Name, Amen!"

Hebrews 11:6 - "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

If you have accepted Christ, LET US KNOW!!! ☺ It's WONDERFUL NEWS!!! We would like to help you get started in the right direction in growing Spiritually and give you some resources to start your Walk with Christ! If you want to e-mail me personally and discuss this issue more or tell me about your decision of Faith, go right on ahead!

Psalms 103:12 - "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

Therefore, Jesus Christ has paid our price, taken our sins and cast them into the sea (Isn't that AMAZING?! He casts them into the sea - doesn't keep them around! (see Micah 7:19)), just because we have accepted Him as Lord and Savior.

All charges dismissed! There is no need for a gavel in Jesus' court - All charges have been dismissed with those who love Him and have Him in their heart! Praise the Lord for that AMAZING reward!

Deuteronomy 31:6 - "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

Keep evangelizing and witnessing, and pray for those who have not experienced Christ's Love first-hand, because it is Amazing!

James 5:20 - "Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

May the Lord Jesus Christ bless you all as you go out into the world and share the Gospel with friends, family, and others around you. Praise the Lord!

He will never leave you nor forsake you, and He is SO AWESOME! He is Mighty and Just and Powerful and Holy, Holy, Holy! We need to Praise His Holy Name!

Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty, who Was and Is and Is to Come! Glory be unto His Infinitely Powerful Name!

"Endlessly"
By Sterling Franklin

Never be lazy and settle for less,
When it comes to Serving the Lord,
He provides and blesses, protects and guides,
For Greater is His Reward.

Infinite, Wonderful, Miraculous, Just,
His Kingdom shall not see an end,
Why invest all your time in the things of the earth,
When Jesus is the most Loyal Friend?

Salvation He brings through the Cross that He bore,
And the Victory over the grave,
Why would I settle for much less than Jesus,
For it's things of Him that I crave.

He fills us with Love and He comforts us daily,
A lot of people don't see,
The best way to Joy and the best way to Peace,
Is obeying our Lord endlessly.

"Come Closer"
By Sterling Franklin

Come closer, dear Lord, come closer, I pray,
The darkness of night has been long cast away.
Light from the brightest of lamps can't compare
To the Strength of Your Hand and the Words that You Say.

The demons, they shudder, and Your servants delight,
At the fact of Your Being and Your True, Endless Might,
At the fact that You are Holy and Eternally Fair,
You have Broken our blindness and Restored us to sight.

"God's Power in a Darkened Room"

By Sterling Franklin

(First of My Bible Studies at Teenz4theLord.com...take a deep breath! ☺)

Hey, we're talking about prayer, so let's open in Prayer...

Lord, thank you for the privilege of living today. Thank You for all that You've done in our lives, and we ask that You make us more like Your Perfect Son, Jesus Christ. In Jesus' Mighty Name, Amen.

I. Asking God in Faith...

Marcus was a young boy with a dream...to become the best BMX bike racer in the world. He saw a red Huffy Dirt Bike in the store and wanted his parents to get it for him. He thought a while and thought that maybe if he really asked with total hope in his parents getting the dirt bike, maybe – JUST MAYBE – he would get it!

Well...Marcus never got enough courage to ask, so five years later, he finally asked his mom,

"Yo mom, if I asked you for a dirt bike 5 years ago, would you have bought it for me?"

His mom replied,

"Yeah, why didn't you just ask?"

Same goes with Prayer...we need to converse with God and ask Him for what we really need...

Matthew 7:11 - "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"

Elijah was greatly used of God, and he was an earnest man of prayer ('earnest' as in faithful and diligent, not as in Hemmingway).

James 5:17-18 - "Elias (Elijah) was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."

Ok...let's see...that was a much greater request than asking for a dirt bike, plus it showed a manifestation of God's power, even over nature! Elijah asked God for rain, and he had full trust in God here, and PRAYED EARNESTLY. What happened? God granted exactly what Elijah asked for.

What does John say in 1 John Chapter 5?

1 John 5:14-15 - "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, IF WE ASK ANY THING ACCORDING TO HIS WILL, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, WHATSOEVER WE ASK, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

Wow! Now that's a promise! How can anyone have that come true?

You must not waver (be shaky) in your faith when praying...

James 1:6-7 - "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord."

In common, everyday prayer, you should get right with the Lord and live a pleasing life for Him in order to be most blessed by God...

James 5:14-15 - "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the PRAYER OF FAITH shall SAVE THE SICK, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

God hears our prayers:

Psalms 5:3 - "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up."

Those trying to live a God-serving and God-pleasing life, especially...

Psalms 34:15 - "The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry."

James 5:16b - "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

II. How should we Pray?

We are literally talking to God when we pray to Him. Think of a conversation with one of your friends. Imagine 2 cases:

Jim: Hey, Dana!

Dana: Hey, Jim!

Jim: I want a dirt bike and I need to get an A on this next test, and I need to go to the beach. Bye bye.

Dana: {feeling a little dry and a bit disrespected}

VERSUS...

David: Hey, my good friend Moesha!

Moesha: Hey! What's going on?

David: Well, Moesha, I want to thank you for being so faithful to me and sticking by me in such thick circumstances. You are great to have around! Hey, I have this one problem, though. I don't feel that I've been friendly enough with you.

Can you help me be a better friend to you?

Moesha: {smiles}, Sure, sounds great!

We should be as the second conversation, asking for the deeper things of God. Prayer is a form of Praise & Worship and is truly a highly underrated in that respect. We should not only pray for what we need, but we should also thank and Praise God for Who He is, and because of that, the things He's done in our lives. That's HIGHLY pleasing to Him!

How would we be wrong in praying?

We need to have the right intent when praying...

You can sin in prayer if you boast about it...

Praying in secret is a very good and safe idea. You can pray for others or for your food in public, that's great, and that can serve as a good testimony to others, but if you pray in public (as the Pharisees did) just to brag about 'WOW, I'M SO SPIRITUAL -- I'M PRAYING!' then you better reconsider...

Matthew 6:5-6 - "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

So...if you pray just for show, your reward has already been paid...by the acknowledgment from others. If you pray with a good intent, you'll be rewarded in Heaven.

'Prayerwalking' is a new fad going around the world. People actually are being sent out to be a 'Prayerwalking missionary' to other countries. Prayerwalking is where people walk around a town, praying about what they're seeing. Yes, they can have the right motive, but yes, also, they can be thinking that their prayers are more powerful when they see what is exactly going on.

Same principle: Why don't you pray for a random country and its people? I mean, really? God knows what is happening there. If you truly want God's will for their lives there, just pray for them! We are supposed to be in prayer for all the Saints as well as those who despitely use us.

"UH OH!!!! Hey, I haven't been to Mozambique, but I think my glasses were made there. I'll pray for them. (...and God will honor that, even!)"

How 'bout you research their land this week a little bit and pray for the people there?

You can also mess up your prayers if it is merely a 'vain repetition' or a chant...

Matthew 6:7 - "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking."

But God honors persistence. There is a difference between chanting and praying diligently and persistently. Jesus prayed three times in the Garden, for example.

Matthew 6:8 - "Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."

WOW! God is All-Knowing! He knows what we need BEFORE we even ask Him! So why pray, then?

1 Thessalonians 5:17 - "Pray without ceasing."

Praying without ceasing is NOT where you lock yourself in your room for 24 hours a day, with only a glass of lemonade by your side. It's more of being in a 'state of prayer', where you can pray whenever need be and where you have an attitude of reverence for God, with full trust in Him.

Besides, what would the Great Commission mean to ANYONE if they just sat and conversed with nobody else?

Cool expression to remember: "The only way UP is DOWN on your knees!" God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble (see 1 Peter 5:5).

1 Peter 5:6 - "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

James 4:10 - "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

I personally have noticed about prayer that when I'm feeling down or angry about something, if I pray for help, I'll ALWAYS feel better after I pray! Sometimes during hard times, we may notice that we've been lured away from prayer and study of the Bible. Step one is definitely getting back into diligent prayer and study habits!

Remember that God is both our Provider (Jehovah Jireh) and our Comforter...

Psalm 46:1 - "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

(Just a note, Psalm 46 is a GREAT chapter for comfort in hard times and tragedies.)

III. Some Things to Pray For...

a) SALVATION!!!!

Romans 10:9-10 - "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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

John 3:16 - "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."

Ever seen a 'John 3:16' sign at a Football game or Wrestling match? It's a good verse to promote! Accepting Christ is the most important decision we could ever make in our lives!

b) Wisdom, Knowledge, and Understanding

James 1:5 - "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

Proverbs 2:3-6 - "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD giveth wisdom: out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding."

c) Fruits of the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-23 - "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

We ain't talkin bout no lemon-lime, boyee!

d) God's Will, even in our lives...

Matthew 6:10 - "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

Jesus, in the famous prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, said (as recorded in *Matthew 26:42*), 'O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.'

God's Will is the best way, no matter what.

e) Others and ourselves

- Leaders
- Warring Nations & Enemies
- Each other
 - People you know
 - People you don't know, but have heard about
 - People you don't know AT ALL!

1 Timothy 2:1-4 - "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for ALL THAT ARE IN AUTHORITY; that we may lead a quiet

and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

Yep, prayers should be given for everyone! Hope not individually, eh? 6.1 Billion a night would be tough (WHICH ONE WAS SUSAN DAVIS AGAIN?!?!)

Paul prayed that others did not fall into sin:

2 Corinthians 13:7 - "Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest, though we be as reprobates."

f) FORGIVENESS OF SINS!!!

1 John 1:9 - "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

- Our Needs {example: Lord's Prayer - 'Give us this day our daily bread.', in Matthew 6}

- Opportunity to Witness

Colossians 4:2-4 - "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak."

Prayer is extremely powerful, and MAN...I didn't even skim the surface, really. Pray for your friends and family and yourself, and even those who you don't know very well. The Lord knows what is needed in every human being's life and will honor a prayer of anyone with a good heart for serving Him.

Jesus, Elijah, David, Solomon, and even Jabez were just a few to name who used prayer as a huge means of strength.

Matthew 7:7-8 - "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened."

Let's pray...

Dear Lord, thank you for Your Awesome Word that we can read every day to find out more about who You are and what we are to do for You. Lord, let us pray in the right way and frequently, remembering that You are the Strength that we must live by. The joy of the Lord is our strength, and we praise You for all You've done in our lives. Bless our weeks, make them safe and smooth. Thank You, Lord, in Jesus' Name, Amen.

"Lord, Let me Serve You"

By Sterling Franklin

Lord, let me serve You,
How Faithful Thou art,
Let me praise you forever
With all of my heart.

I need You more each day,
You are awesome indeed,
You water my spirit
After planting Your seed.

I have found I am nothing,
But You are Everything,
Lord, I want to exalt You,
To lift my hands to You and sing.

You take care of my sickness,
And You heal my disease,
Oh, the Love that I get
When I fall to my knees.

You comfort me to smiles,
And you wipe away my tears,
And have set me on Your Path
For all of my Years.

How Glorious You Are,
And I will truly serve You,
For the harvest is large,
But the workers are few.

Lord, You hear all my prayers,
But just grant me this plea,
I want to give you everything I have
And give You all the Glory.

I will worship You, Lord,
My Infinite King,
For You have Power over darkness
And over death's bitter sting.

“Cleansing Power of God”
By Sterling Franklin

Main text: *Isaiah 6:1-10*

- (1) In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.

So in about 740 BC, when king Uzziah died, Isaiah had a vision. Sometimes prophets and rulers had visions and dreams, often needing interpretation. This is the only recorded vision that Isaiah had, and it was a very clear presentation from God DIRECTLY to him.

Pharaoh had a dream once, where he dreamed about 7 skinny cows and 7 fat cows. The 7 skinny cows ate the 7 fat ones, and Pharaoh did not know what to make of it. Joseph was there to interpret his dream, and Joseph was put second in command after a stint in prison because of it.

God wrote a message on the wall when Belshazzar was king in Daniel's time. The writing made Belshazzar very fearful, so much so that his knees shook together and banged against one another.

Daniel 4:6 – “Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.”

Daniel was the only one who could give the interpretation, even after Belshazzar asked astrologers and soothsayers what they made of it all.

The point of the matter is, this vision was pretty straight-forward, and Isaiah was put in the 'office' of prophet from this encounter on. This wasn't the start of his prophecies from the Lord, but it was a new level for him with God.

- (2) Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.
(3) And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.
(4) And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Seraphims were angels, their name actually comes from the Hebrew for 'burning ones'. They were powerful beings, but still were not able to be compared to God to ANY extent. We find in Hebrews that men were 'below angels,' and all throughout the epistles of Paul and Peter, we know that we will have a 'glorified body' after death if Jesus is our Savior.

'Angels' actually comes from the word for 'messenger' in Greek (angelos, or 'αγγελος'), and in a very literal sense, they are messengers, indeed. God sends them to protect us sometimes. After Jesus was tempted in the wilderness, angels were there to minister to Him (in this case, supplied Him with food - similarly to what they did with Elijah - and congratulated Him).

(5) Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

When Isaiah was in the Presence of God, he only could see his faults more clearly and was ashamed. He realized that he was not worthy of being there and he was merely a man of unclean lips.

- (6) Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:
(7) And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.

No matter what the case, if God wants you to do something, He will make you qualified if you allow Him to. God won't give you more than you can EVER bear, and keeping that in mind and living with that fact, following His Call on your life is possible. "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it" (see 1 Thessalonians 5:24).

The seraphim with the coal from the altar (with a continual fire burning) can also be a symbol of a person sharing the Gospel. The person shared with may realize his sin due to new revelation, thanks to the Holy Ghost, and the person sharing the Gospel can give them the good news of Jesus Christ. Jesus is faithful and just to forgive EVERY sin we've committed and will commit, and to cleanse us from EVERY unrighteous part of us, no matter how hidden those parts of us are. God knows every secret of our hearts.

Hebrews 4:13 – "Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."

The closer we get to God in our relationship with Him, the more we hate sin and realize what betrayal we have done to our Master. To fear the Lord is to hate evil (see Proverbs 8:13). 'Lord' in Greek is literally, Master (kyrios or 'κυριος'). As we know, too, God never changes, and in the Old Testament, He is referred to as Adonai, which is literally 'Master' in Hebrew.

There is cleansing power in the Kingdom of God. Not only cleansing, but empowering power. It may sound redundant, but it's an understatement. God

will give you so much strength, that it'll make your head spin! You will look back on tough times and be awed at how much He helped you out.

(8) Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

We need to have the willingness to obey God in whatever He has us do. Isaiah was a unique prophet. Many prophets made excuses to God about how they are incapable of doing the work He has set out for them. Moses was concerned that he couldn't speak well in front of people, Jeremiah was concerned that he wasn't experienced enough and was too young, but Isaiah knew that he could do all things with enablement from his King, standing right in front of him.

We can do ALL things through Jesus Christ, who empowers us - gives us the strength we need (over and above) to carry on His Work. Without Him, we are like a vine cut off from the rest of the tree, only leaving us to wither (see John 15). God won't LET you wither with His Power. He won't let you crumble when the pressure is on - Just keep your trust in Him and you'll go far in Him and in life.

(9) And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

(10) Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

God's mission for Isaiah was to present His message to them. God would destroy the cities due to their disobedience to Him – in many cases, people made their own idols and bowed down to them. Many would hear the words and not accept it, and be completely blind to the truth. Such is the case even today.

Relativism and sensationalism can only last you so far, but if you try to climb that vine for eternity, you will only find yourself with a limited stalk. Climb the vine of eternal life through Jesus, and you will find yourself in Heaven after you climb the vine of daily life until you die (or until Jesus returns first).

A good picture is in Isaiah 44, where the picture of a carpenter is given. The carpenter cuts down trees, makes all his measurements, uses the wood, some for fire, and the rest to make an idol. He then bows down to the idol and asks it to save him. Does he know that he's bowing down to an inanimate block of wood?

In Psalm 115, it talks about how the idols have eyes but see not, have ears but hear not, have qualities but have no living qualities. They can't save you more than a trash can lid!

We each often have idols in our own lives, too. Put the Lord Jesus first in your heart and everything else will fall into place. Serving the Lord doesn't equate to a boring life, but rather the most exciting one - beyond what you could have ever imagined.

His Ways and Thoughts are WAY above ours, as far as the sky is above the ground, even (see Isaiah 55). Isaiah was cleansed in God's Presence and was able to do what the Lord would have him do.

No matter what your condition, even as Isaiah was a man of "unclean lips," and dwelling with an unclean population of people, God will make a way for you to please Him, and He will bless you for being obedient to His Word.

Even if you are full of sin right now, coming to Jesus will result in total purification, just upon asking Him to cleanse you. No matter where you are, He hears you, and He answers all your prayers. Sometimes He doesn't answer them the way you want Him to, but in the end, you will see that He answers them according to your best interests – and most importantly, according to His Best Will.

He could have created us and left us alone completely. He heals, restores, forgives, empowers, strengthens, makes a way out of no way, gives joy and peace and purpose in life. He is the most caring Father we could ever have.

When the people in the upper room were filled and empowered by the Holy Ghost, they were empowered to do AMAZING things for the Lord. All throughout the book of Acts, miracles and conversions were all over the place! God has much more power and ability than we think.

So make a commitment to serve the Lord. Whatever He wants you to do is the most fulfilling thing you CAN do in life. If you haven't accepted Christ and want to, ask Him now: "Lord Jesus, be my Savior. Forgive my sins. I believe You are the Son of God and give life eternally to those who believe. Amen."

If you want to serve the Lord, give it all to Him right now. Pray something like, "Father, I want to serve You and do Your Will for my life. Empower me to do whatever You want me to do in life. Thank You, Lord. I know there are Promises in Your Name much greater than any sin can give me. In Jesus' Name, Amen."

Sometimes you may feel that God has chosen the wrong person for the job He's called you to. That's when you get away from feelings and stick to what God's Word says!

I challenge you this week to tell even one person you haven't talked much to about the Gospel. Who knows, maybe they will be a great Warrior for the Lord!

"Stayed on Thee"

By Sterling Franklin

LORD, I ask for a heart that is stayed on Thee,
One that won't falter or give in to the enemy,
A heart so full of You that You get the Victory,
Even through the thick and thin of everyday affairs.

LORD, grant me the desire for more of You,
A desire to be loyal, faithful, and forever true,
A willingness to follow and do as You would do,
Even with the distracting troubles and worldly cares.

"When the Going gets Tough"

By Sterling Franklin

When the going gets tough,
The world gets a-going,
Depression arises,
And strife gets a-flowing.
With Hatred and Envy,
The world fills its heart,
Confusion and Suffering,
Right from the start.

When the going gets tough,
The Righteous start going,
To prayer on their knees,
The Lord with Strength bestowing.
Joy and Deliverance
Shine through all their deeds,
The Holy Spirit comforts,
And plants Godly Seeds.

"A Pure Heart to Serve the Lord"
By Sterling Franklin

Let's start with a word of prayer...

Lord, we live in an era where temptation surrounds us and others pressure us to live in sin. Father, we know You have a more Glorious Way to life, and that is through the Life You Provide through the Lord Jesus Christ. Holy Spirit, teach us today what You would have out of this study of Your Word. Thank You for Your Word, Lord. We Praise You for everything You have done, are doing, and will do, in Your Precious Son Jesus Christ's Name, Amen.

We live in a generation today that embraces sin all over the place. Writers of most television shows don't present a message pleasing to the Lord, instead they write about violence, gratuitous sex, gossip, and hate.

You can turn to any Fox, NBC, ABC, and CBS and expect to see an average of 20-25 violent acts per hour.....each hour of Saturday Morning programming.

Though the programming may seem a little more gratuitous on prime time television, the violence is on 24 hours a day, and what we take in will affect us if we don't have a good filter on things.

Psalm 24:3-5

3 Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?

4 He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

5 He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

We need to be pure in heart before the Lord, simple as that.

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

I'm saying...WHO wants to see our Wonderful Lord?! I CERTAINLY DO!
It will be the best moment of any of our existences, that is, meeting our Creator!
Hallelujah!

Psalm 51:10 - "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."

So, how do we go about this 'being pure' business?

Proverbs 4:23 – “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”

Solomon, through inspiration of God, tells us in that verse that we need to guard ourselves through wisdom into not being corrupted by outside sources.

Pretend there's a boy named Daniel. Daniel lives in the middle of West Palm Street.

Living next door to his house is a family of four who always encourage Daniel and give him a good time by playing games with him as a group.

Daniel used to be a shy, sad, and introverted boy until he started visiting their house, but now, he is a happy, outgoing young man.

Then one week, that family of four took a vacation...

On the other side of the street was a family of seven who always yelled their brains out at each other. Daniel visited their house and spent some time with them.

By the middle of that week, Daniel started using drugs with them and began yelling at his parents. When the family of four came back, they hardly recognized Daniel.

As humans, we have developing characters and personalities. Part of what shapes us are the people around us -- our environment and our peers.

What if we expose ourselves to the Bible?

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

The Message of Jesus Christ is our guide to better living. The thief came to steal, kill, and destroy, but Jesus has come that we would have Life, and Life more Abundantly! (see John 10:10)

Some sound advice:

Colossians 3:1 – “Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.”

Matthew 6:33 – “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”

Being pure in heart is not a cakewalk to start out. Satan is out to pull you away from God. However, the more firm you are in Jesus Christ, the easier it will be to escape sin and temptation to sin.

Sin is similar to Thoreau's idea of a "beaten path". Once you commit a specific sin, it becomes easier and easier to commit that sin the following times. Each time you walk toward the sin, the weeds on the ground become easier and easier to pass through. It's like a mown path straight to that sin...until you finally trust the Lord and avoid it once. Once you avoid that sin, you first of all have pleased the Lord, and also have seen proof that you CAN avoid committing that sin through Jesus' Help. Then, the weeds grow up again.

A very on-the-money definition of sin is found in 1 John 3:4:

1 John 3:4 – "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

Romans 2:14-15

14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

15 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another.

God did a marvelous thing when He created our 'consciences'. He wrote the law, summarized by the 10 Commandments, on our hearts. We generally have a sense of right and wrong by the feelings we get from our consciences, and when we are Saved by the Grace of Jesus Christ, by the Holy Spirit.

Remember that God the Father had to give His Only Begotten Son for us...why? Because we create a chasm between us & Him when we sin, and Jesus is the bridge we need to reach Almighty God. Nothing impure will be in His Sight, and we need to be clothed with the Righteousness of Jesus Christ!

Before we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord & Savior, we are slaves to sin.

Romans 6:20-23

20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

But God has given us the way out of sin and guilt and shame - *and that is through the mighty work of Jesus Christ on the cross.*

All we have to do is ask Him for forgiveness of our sins and to be our Lord & Savior, believing in what He did on the cross, and give yourself to Him to have eternal life with Him in Heaven!

We will then produce fruit, or results, upon obeying God, that will improve the quality of our lives infinitely! Jesus is Faithful and Just to forgive us of all our sins and to cleanse us of all our unrighteousness (see 1 John 1:9).

Yes, we will all stumble, but we won't fall when we have Jesus to catch us and put us back upright on our feet on the pathway to holiness. Ultimate Holiness is a pursuit, not an achievement, and we will not be Ultimately Holy when we are here on earth.

John 14:15 - "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

If we follow His Commandments, He will reveal more of Himself to you as you increase in relationship with Him.

John 14:21 – "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

HE must increase, we must decrease (see John 3:30).

We have the Holy Ghost in this day and age...

John 14:26 – "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

We need to Praise the Lord! Life out there in the world can be a circus without the intervention of our Sovereign Lord! Give the Lord time to work in our lives and He will honor that and bless you for it!

One of the functions of the Holy Ghost is to sanctify us, not to mention, to set us completely, Praise the Lord, ON FIRE for Jesus! He will help us if we allow Him to.

We need to LONG to be pure and holy before Him! We can ask Him in prayer for that, and for a zeal for the things of His Kingdom. You WON'T regret it! Praise the Lord!

So what if we go through temptations and trials? How can we stay pure?

James 1:2-4

2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

3 Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.

4 But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

Cast all your cares upon Jesus, and He will strengthen you in the hard times of life. Whatever you face, He is the Answer, and He will be all the comfort you will ever need if you only trust in Him.

The devil hates it when we trust in the Lord and will come at us and attack us. If you live a godly life, you will DEFINITELY suffer persecution (see 2 Tim. 3:12), but we need to stand with our firm foundation in Jesus Christ by being not only hearers of the Word, but doers (see James 1:22)!

One simple piece of advice - When you are tempted, look to the Cross of Christ. Think of what He has done, Praise Him, and the temptation will decrease. The more you taste of our sweet Lord, the less you will want to taste of this bitter world of sin.

Philippians 4:8 – “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

2 Corinthians 7:1 – “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.”

This world is a confusion-filled world. Strife, stress, anger, envy, hatred, lust, and simply and pure evil fill this world. So many don't yet know the Love of Christ.

Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty (see 2 Corinthians 3:17). Whosoever the Son sets free is Free Indeed! AMEN?!

If you have never experienced this Saving Love of Christ before or have lost your flare for the things of God, GET that fire back, because it's the best way to live your life.

If you want, pray this prayer with me...

“Lord Jesus, I am a sinner and need Your Forgiveness. I am sorry for my transgressions and want to live in Your Ways. Give me a passion and a FIRE for the things of You, Lord. I give my life to You and ask You to be my Lord & Savior. Thank You, Lord, for dying on the cross for the payment of my sins and rising again to prove You were the Son of God. You have done SO MUCH for

me, let me give you the Glory through my life and let Your Light shine through me, In Jesus' Name I pray, Amen.”

We need to stay in the Word of God to stay pure.

Psalm 119:11 – “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

The Word of God is POWERFUL!

Psalm 19:7 – “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.”

Let us be wise - let us live our lives purely before the Lord and be like the type of man Jesus Describes in Luke 6:48...

Luke 6:48 – “He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.”

No matter how much you are attacked or tempted, don't give in. Jesus has a better plan than the guilt and sadness that will encompass you when you sin! Satan is angry because he knows he has a short time left on this earth, but if we are Born-again Believers, we have the power over him by the Blood of Jesus (see Revelation 12:12)! Praise the Lord! Jesus is the best news any media can publish!

Amen, Let us Pray...

Lord, thank You for all Your Wonderous and Mighty Works. Let us live pure and undefiled before Your Throne, as Your true children. Thank You for calling those who trust in You 'child'. Let us honor You and give You the Glory as we go out into the world to serve You. Let us see more of You and less of temptation. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory, forever and ever! Thank You, Lord. Give us not only a sense of balance, but a DEEP PASSION for You, our Glorious King, fill us up with Your Holy Spirit and fire us up for Your Service. In the Infinite Name of Jesus, Amen.

"Touch me, my Lord"

By Sterling Franklin

Lord, You are infinite, most significant, faithful and wise
Perfect in ruling, reigning justly in the skies.
You are Holy, Holy, Holy, and I praise Your Mighty Name,
Ignite in me a desire, an unquenchable flame.
Lord, You are King and are Powerful, I want You more each passing day,
Jesus, give me a love that never passes away,
Touch me, my King, my Savior, my Friend,
Lord, let Your Kingdom yeast be worked into the dough to the end.
God Almighty, You are victorious, and mighty in deed
Help me to plant in others Your Holy Spirit's seed.
Use me, oh Lord, and fill me I pray
Let me serve You forever and never wander astray.
You are the Light of Life and the Bright Morning Star,
Lord, You have Touched me so deeply, how Gracious You are.
I love You, my Lord, You have filled me with love,
You have blessed me with riches that have been sent from above.
You are the Father of Lights and Your Works are so Great
Let Your Holy Spirit flow down and Your Touch not abate.
Lord, You are God, and You are King, and I want to Praise You
You have changed me and made me into a servant more true.
Lord, I am nothing, and I can't do anything without Your Miraculous Might,
You are Everything and Everything You are, Thou rulest in Light.
I feel Your Awesome Presence around me this hour,
Lord, You are full of Compassion, of Goodness, and Power.
But I love You, my Lord, and You love me much more,
Let my flesh be sincere and broken, Lord, You will open opportunity's door.
I am faulty and weak, You are awesome and supreme,
With me and me, I lose all, but You and I make a great team.
Hallelujah, my Jesus, You are worthy of all of my time,
Let me follow You daily and get rid of sin's slime.
Oh, Touch me, my Lord, and fill me with Your Holy Spirit,
'Til I overflow with Your Joy and, to others I tell, that they may hear it.

“The Lord Provides”

By Sterling Franklin

Dear Lord, we Praise You. We come before you and ask for a good study of Your Word. You Provide, and we thank You for that. Thank You for who You are and what You are doing and are going to do. Touch us deeply, Lord, let us see more of Your Glory. In Jesus' Mighty Name, amen.

Provide → Pro = before, in advance; Vide = from Latin videre, to see.

So, basically...Provide comes from the basis of 'seeing in advance'. Tonight we will be discussing how He provided for Moses and Abraham in the past and how the Lord has provided and provides for us today.

I. Red Sea Parting - the Lord Provides for Moses

First off, you all probably have heard about the story of the Parting of the Red Sea before at some point in your life. ☺

Because Pharaoh kept holding the Israelites captive and didn't let them go, the Lord put a final plague upon Egypt, where a family's firstborn son would be killed if the family didn't have the blood of the Passover lamb upon the top and sides of the outside door.

Pharaoh, after losing his son to the plague, finally told Moses that his people could be free, FINALLY - after all the years of bondage they had suffered.

Exodus 13:21-22

21 And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night:
22 He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

So, they were led by the Lord - in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night.

Exodus 14:4-6

4 And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, that he shall follow after them; and I will be honoured upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; that the Egyptians may know that I am the LORD. And they did so.
5 And it was told the king of Egypt that the people fled: and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants was turned against the people, and they said, Why have we done this, that we have let Israel go from serving us?
6 And he made ready his chariot, and took his people with him:

The Lord said that he would harden Pharaoh's heart, and He did, and it ended up for His Glory. Pharaoh, after telling Moses that he could be free with his people (the Israelites), Pharaoh changes his mind and gets ready to take them prisoner again.

Exodus 14:10-12

10 And when Pharaoh drew nigh, the children of Israel lifted up their eyes, and, behold, the Egyptians marched after them; and they were sore afraid: and the children of Israel cried out unto the LORD.

11 And they said unto Moses, Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?

12 Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians? For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness."

The Israelites panicked when they saw the Egyptians coming, so what does Moses do? Does he freak out like a chicken with its head cut off?

NOPE!

He keeps his cool
He stays in school!
well.....maybe not the school part.

Exodus 14:13-14

13 And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you to day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.

14 The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.

He had total faith and trust in God's Protection in this situation.

Exodus 14:15-20

15 And the LORD said unto Moses, Wherefore criest thou unto me? speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward:

16 But lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

17 And I, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they shall follow them: and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

18 And the Egyptians shall know that I am the LORD, when I have gotten me honour upon Pharaoh, upon his chariots, and upon his horsemen.

19 And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them:

20 And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night.

The Lord tells Moses what to do in verse 16 - to lift up his rod and stretch his hand over the sea, and divide it. Simple enough, eh? However, it takes a TON of faith to do that. In verse 21, that's exactly what Moses did.

Exodus 14:21

21 And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided.

There was a wall of water to their left and right, and dry ground right in front of them. Pharaoh then, with his Egyptians, went in after them. All their horses & chariots were with them, too.

In verse 24, we see that the Lord looks at the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud, and we see in verse 25 that the Egyptians are terrified and want to turn back...

Exodus 14:24-25

24 And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the LORD looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians,

25 And took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the LORD fighteth for them against the Egyptians.

God then tells Moses what to do again, and Moses obeys fully...

Exodus 14:26-28

26 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen.

27 And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the LORD overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea.

28 And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them.

The Israelites were fine, though. Unscathed, untouched, not drowned (I would say undrowned, but that ain't a word).

Exodus 14:29-31: "29 But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. 30 Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. 31 And Israel saw that great work which the LORD did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the LORD, and believed the LORD, and his servant Moses."

What does this 'feared the LORD' mean? To fear the Lord doesn't mean to be 'afraid' of the Lord, but to revere Him, be in awe of Him, and in result, be obedient to Him in your actions.

Proverbs 14:26-27 tell about what the fear of the Lord carries with it: "26 In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge. 27 The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death."

II. Jehovah Jireh - the Lord our Provider

Abraham was a great man of faith, and he followed after the Lord. There was one time where the Lord tested him to really make sure Abraham was obedient to Him.

The Lord told Abraham to go up to Mount Moriah and sacrifice his son Isaac. Genesis 22 is our text. Abraham brought Isaac up with the wood and knife and fire to light the wood, and Isaac was a little surprised...

Genesis 22:7 - "7 And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"

Abraham had faith, however, that the Lord would provide for him a lamb to sacrifice, as we see in verse 8:

Genesis 22:8 - "8 And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together."

So Abraham is about to stab his son Isaac for a sacrifice, but then an angel of the Lord calls out to him and stops him from slaughtering Isaac.

Genesis 22:11-12: "11 And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. 12 And he said,

Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me."

Abraham must have been THRILLED, but must have been EVEN MORE THRILLED when he saw that the Lord had provided a sacrifice...

Genesis 22:13: "13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son."

...and appropriately enough, Abraham calls this place 'Jehovahjireh', meaning 'the Lord Sees' or 'the Lord Provides'!

Genesis 22:14: "14 And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen."

GOD IS GOOD! What also was really cool about this was that Abraham had faith that the Lord would provide a lamb. In this case, the RAM was not Random Access Memory, but a male sheep. (Haha, imagine Abraham sacrificing 1 Gig of RAM on the altar.)

III. The Sacrificial Lamb of God - Our Perfect Sacrifice - the Lord Providing for us...

Jesus is often called the 'Lamb of God'. Pretty cool, huh? :) God the Father sent down His Son, and He was the Sacrificial Lamb for the payment of our sins.

Romans 5:8 - "8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

He died on the cross, rose again on the third day, and is seated in Glory at the Right Hand of the Father...but He'll be back!

I Corinthians 15:3-4: "3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:"

The Lord provides a way for us to not only escape sin's curse: death.

Romans 6:23: "23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

John 10:10: "10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Jesus has come to give us life - and life more ABUNDANTLY! If you want Jesus Christ to be your Savior and have not done so already, it's as simple as ABC.

A - Admit that you are a sinner, B - Believe that Jesus is God's Son, rose from the dead and is the only way to Heaven, and C - Confess your sins to God, ask Him to be Your Savior.

Basically, if you want eternal life with Him and haven't accepted Him yet as your Lord & Savior, pray this with me:

"Dear Lord Jesus, I am a sinner. Forgive me of my sins right now. Thank You for dying on the cross to pay for my sins. I ask You right now to become my Lord and Savior so that I might be with You in Heaven for eternity after life. Let me live a life pleasing to You and let me know You more. Thank You, in Jesus' Name, Amen."

Salvation is EXTREMELY weighty in value, if you didn't know already. Either eternal damnation or eternal love, joy, peace, etc!!!! No road rage in Heaven, either!

The Lord provides for us in so many ways, it's AWESOME! He is Worthy of all our Praise, and He will bless us beyond measure for being obedient to His Word. He can take us out of the toughest situation, He will provide. Let's finish the message in prayer...

Lord, thank You so much for Providing for us. You are Holy, Holy, Holy! Even though we are sinners, Lord, You are so Merciful and bless us and provide for us, anyway, because You Love us unconditionally. Thank You for so much, Lord. You provided for Abraham and Moses, but not just for them, for us as well as a whole. We Praise Your Righteous Name, in Jesus' Name we pray this and thank You, amen.

“Let Me Praise You all Night and all Day”
By Sterling Franklin

Lord, let me Praise you all night and all day,
Let me walk completely in Your Way.
I will make time for Your Word and for prayer,
Let me stand strong in Your Light against every foe and betrayer.

You are worth everything to me, Lord,
Equip me with knowledge from the Spirit's Sword.
You are the treasure that I have found and cherish,
Father, You sent down Your Son that I might not perish.

You are Holy, Holy, Holy, Worthy of everything of me,
You deserve Praises all day long and throughout eternity.
You created beauty and in beauty You delight,
You are awesome and Wonderful, You rule in Your Might.

I worship Your Matchless Grace,
Let Your Presence surround me and fill me in this place.
You are Beautiful, Lord, and I love you as much as I am able,
Lord, increase my capacity so I can love You more and have fellowship with You
at Your Table.

You are SO GOOD to me, Lord, You have provided so much,
Let me serve You forever and not hold You simply as a crutch.
Let me walk in Your Ways, and Lord, show me more of Your Infinity,
You are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - the Divine and blessed Trinity.

Thank You, Lord, in Jesus' Name, amen.

“Night and Day”
By Sterling Franklin

If you look at night and look at day, you see that they are two sides of the same spectrum. Night and day are often included in analogies giving two extremes, often symbolizing evil and good. For example, a robber comes during the dark hours (night) and takes goods. If he came during the day, he'd be caught, most likely.

Romans 13:12 – “The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”

What if you took night and day and put them together? Answer? They'd be like a polarized bar magnet - South on one side, North on the other. They would be like thin oil floating totally on top of thick corn syrup, not mixing at all. You can't combine night and day to get sunset -- you'd only be left with night and day, side-by-side.

Many relativists believe that, in a sense, you can combine 'absolutes' like 'yes' and 'no', 'true' and 'false', 'moral' and 'immoral,' into a middle-ground such as 'if it's all right for you, it's yes/true/moral.'

Imagine what society would be like if everyone followed God's Word. Peace comes with obedience to His Word and a great deal of joy as well. Depression would decrease enormously, gaps in families would cease to exist. God's Original Garden of Eden concept would be essentially restored in the long run.

But we know we are sinners. No man is without sin, and if we say that we are without sin, we make God out to be a liar, and the Truth is not in us. Many believe that sin is also relative. In 1 John 3:4, it clearly states, 'sin is the transgression of the law.' More simply, sin is disobedience and rebellion to God.

2 Timothy 4:3-4

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;
4 And they shall turn away [their] ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

People even go as far as to make up their own religions to satisfy their own itching ears. They are swayed to and fro by other doctrines, and we are commanded to grow up as Christians! When we learn by the milk of the Word and then proceed and get some meat from the Word, we will be stronger in our walk with Christ.

Ephesians 4:14 – “That we [henceforth] be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, [and] cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”

Without firm grounding, relativistic thought can ruin our lives. Some believe that abortion is ok if you THINK it's ok. It's murder of babies and is abomination to God. Abortion is one of the most heated debates in American culture today. It sometimes seems to be a key issue in splitting up political parties, mainly Democrats and Republicans. The main issue is: what does God feel about this issue?

In Proverbs, one of the seven abominations to God mentioned is the shedding of innocent blood. Abortion is a prime example of brutal and premeditated murder.

Proverbs 6:16-19

16 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:

17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and *hands that shed innocent blood,*

18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,

19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.

Most less-modern ethicists will agree that both denying the true and accepting the false are inclusive in the definition of ‘lying.’ In the Proverbs 6 passage, you may notice that two of the seven abominations to God are explicitly related to falsities. Today, the “new school of thought” follows the mantra, ‘what’s right for you may not be right for me.’ If it’s right for everyone to have their own best interests at heart, the presence of consciences will fade and disappear! “

Romans 3:10 – “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:”

You may get: ‘But that’s talking about being RIGHTEOUS, not about doing GOOD THINGS.’

When you get that comment, just tell them the next two verses:

Romans 3:11-12

11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; *there is none that doeth good, no, not one.*

Good is such a blurred term today, where it can mean ‘moral’ by worldly standards (community service, helping others, being “nice”). Works will get us

nowhere without the Lamb Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, and our righteousness and good works are as filthy rags (see Isaiah 64:6). The Scripture has concluded all under sin (see Galatians 3:22), and the knowledge of sin comes through the Law (see Romans 3:20), but God has provided His Son that we might be partakers in grace and truth (see John 1:17).

No matter what the case, put two solid blocks together, and you can't intercombine them without changing states. Same deal with Truth. In God's eyes, there is Truth and the opposite of Truth – Falsehood and Lies. There is Moral and there is Immoral. There is God's Way (see John 14:6 and Matthew 7:13-14) versus destruction. Which one will you choose, night or day? ...and by which standard – the world's, yours', or God's?

Matthew 7:13-14

13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Romans 3:22-24

22 Even the righteousness of God [which is] by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

“Relatively”
By Sterling Franklin

Time for class, I am ready for the test,
Got my pencil, gonna do my very best.
Studied a bit, but I will ace this exam,
I'll be a true genius, which is just what I am.

Question number one - What color is the sky above?
The Sky? That has flying things like sparrows and doves,
It may be blue to some, but I want to be sly,
To me, relatively, GREEN is the color of the sky.

Question number two - What is two plus two?
I know that the typical answer of four is true,
But true to you may not be true to me,
So relatively, two plus two is SEVEN, that's how I see.

Question number three - What is a tree?
I could say that it's a brown plant with branches and leaves,
But who cares about normal, I want to be strange,
Relatively, a tree is a western song like "Home on the Range."

Question number four - Who was the first American President?
I was dead at the time, and at the time, I wasn't a resident.
I know it was Washington, but I think for myself,
Relatively, dear teacher, #1 was Lawrence Welk.

Last question - number five - What is your name?
Oh, come on now, teacher, is this some kind of game?
It's a gimme, but I don't care, I want to be a dork,
For this question, relatively, my name is now Fork.

Three days after the test, she hands it to me,
It had a ton of red marks, Graded fully and completely,
I was stunned at her comments, her cutting remarks,
They totally shocked me, from out of the dark!

"I know you knew the answers, you were saying them out loud,
You changed them, however, to be different from the crowd.
Relativism doesn't work, and functions as a pitiful song.
Your answers were not RELATIVELY, but ABSOLUTELY Wrong!"

Grade? F!