

Gems of Truth
from the



Word of God

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PREFACE

Spiritual devotion to God is the invisible power that constrains one to dedicate one's self to the Father's master plan, to apply one's self to His purposive will, and to devote one's self to the redemptive effects of His Son, the LORD Jesus Christ.

These devotional gems of truth will fill one's soul with sincerity and one's spirit with heartfelt love towards the Father and devoutness of purpose to walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

Spiritual devotion to God leads one to *wholly* give up one's self to the study and practice of the LORD's holy *Torah*. Spiritual devotion to the LORD's holy Name leads one into a strong, zealous, and *undetachable love relationship* with the LORD.

Spiritual devotion leads one into freedom of expression in acts of praise, worship, and the lifting up of the LORD's Name. Spiritual devotion to God gives earnest, eager, and zealous reverence that is due to the LORD's Name. Spiritual devotion toward the LORD influences and inspires one to dedicate, set apart, and give up his whole being to the LORD God.

The ground is always holy where spiritual devotion kneels in submission and worship to God. The most illiterate person who is filled with holy devotion to the precious LORD takes on an illumination of mind and simplicity of heart that exalts him far above others who surround him.

When a lowly person in this world is filled with holy devotion to God, he will not appear base and cheap. When the highest person of this world is filled with holy devotion to God, he will not appear arrogant and insolent.

Holy, private devotion towards the LORD refreshes the garden of one's heart with distilling drops of rain from God's Spirit. Thus, the heart becomes like a watered garden and the soul like a spring of water whose waters fail not. Holy devotion toward the LORD keeps the heart and soul in a state of prosperity and well-being. God allows Satan to "rattle our gate" when we sleep at our devotions.

Holy devotions make an *imprint* on the minds of the young who are subjected to them. The imprint may appear to be extinguished by the passionate desires of youth, by the attractions of the world, and by the burdensome cares of this world. However, the LORD, in His appointed season, will cause the imprint from holy devotions *to* surface through sufferings, misfortunes, and heartaches. The fires of holy devotions may be covered over with many things, but the faithful LORD will not quench even a smoking flax.

Therefore, it is important for parents to remember that, even when they cannot preach to their children, they can make *ineradicable imprints* on the hearts and minds of their children by their holy devotions toward the LORD. Nothing can so strongly prove God's love to a child's heart and so powerfully awaken reverence in the child's soul as holy family devotion.

In the secret place, the prayer closet, the heart is devotion's temple; there prayer in the Spirit lights the flame which burns unseen by man but *not unaccepted* before God.

The holy devotion of tears, humble penitence, and sincere requests always rise to the ears of our Father Who hears and sees in secret and rewards openly.

Holy devotions toward the LORD are like the secret hidden rivers under the earth. They are hidden from the eyes of the creatures, but they are always beheld by the eyes of the Creator.

Holy devotion to God in the Word and in the prayer closet attracts the loving eyes of the heavenly Gardener Who transplants the sweet flowers from the heavenly paradisiacal garden to the garden of the heart of the saint on his knees in the prayer closet.

Holy devotion in prayer is the *key* that unlocks paradise and lets us enter its blissful joy and happiness.

My heart's prayer and desire is that each reader will find in these precious gems of truth from God's Word the hidden moisture of truth. Truth is like dew in the night season that revives dry, parched nature, and truth is like dew in the morning that beautifies the refreshed nature with glistening, reflected light from the sun, because the sun has risen again!

May God grant you new holy devotions toward Him.

The Author

PRECIOUS GEMS OF TRUTH
FROM THE WORD OF GOD

POSSESSOR - OWNER

And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth: (Genesis 14:19).

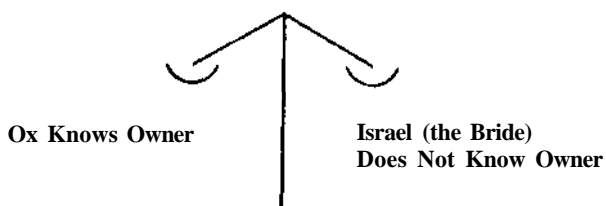
᠔ 𐤃 𐤅 Erect, Teach

The Hebrew word *kawnaw* is the moral, legal concept of the legal right as the basis of ownership, possession of property. *Kawnaw* does not carry the connotation of ownership or possession through strength of power or force. The moral, legal right of ownership is not annulled because the object or property may not, at the moment, be in the possession of the owner. Ignorance on the part of the object as to its owner does not negate the moral, legal right of the owner.

The highest form of the concept of ownership is when the object recognizes and knows its Owner, the LORD God. Therefore, all the energies, forces, and powers of the object are constrained to follow the will and the master plan of the owner. The LORD God, as the Possessor or Owner of heaven and earth, is the purest form of moral, legal right of ownership.

The LORD God is invisible. Yet every speck of glory dust in heaven and every speck of terrestrial dust on earth recognizes and knows its Owner, the LORD God, and desires to follow and obey His will. Likewise, this is true of the heart and soul that has had a birth into the ownership of the LORD God.

The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider (Isaiah 1:3).



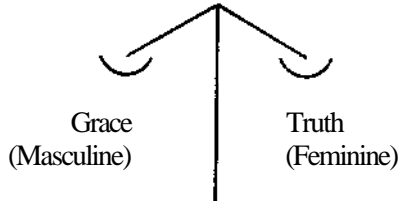
The ox and ass, both brute creatures, know their Creator-Master. But Israel, the Bride of God, does not know their Creator-Bridegroom-Owner. How great is the shame when God's Bride, Israel, has to be shamed by knowledge and understanding of brute creatures.

God has provided better food and yoke for His Bride than man has provided for the ass and ox. The ass and ox do not have to be concerned for the food and the yoke. This is the legal right and responsibility of the Owner. Ask the LORD Jesus Christ to give you a new birth daily into the truth of the moral, legal right of His ownership to you.

CHRISTmas CHRIST

True Christmas is God's gift of grace and truth in Christ.

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17).



True Christmas is not what we give to others or receive from others, but it is receiving the grace and truth in Christ all over again. Grace and truth are God's perfect gift of balance in Christ. This precious pair of scales will balance our crooked mentality. The Hebrew word for *grace* is *khehsed*, meaning favor, kindness, and compassion. The word for *truth* in Hebrew is *Ehmeth*, meaning firmness, faithfulness, and to be true in the heart. Let us look in the Old Testament and see where this scales of grace and truth was prophesied.

And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, the LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth (Exodus 34:6).

In this verse, *grace* is translated as *goodness* in English, but the Jews translated *grace* as *love*. So grace, then, really is love joined to truth. The LORD Jesus Christ, out of His holy Name, pours forth the goodness of His love in all His ruling and working for mankind. The LORD's grace (goodness, love) is always working for our salvation and happiness in the midst of all our painful afflictions. The grace (goodness, love) of the Bridegroom is the fountainhead, the course of all energy, and is the lever of all action. The LORD's gracious love gives energy to our will, heart, and mind, and then uses that energy to lift up His Name.

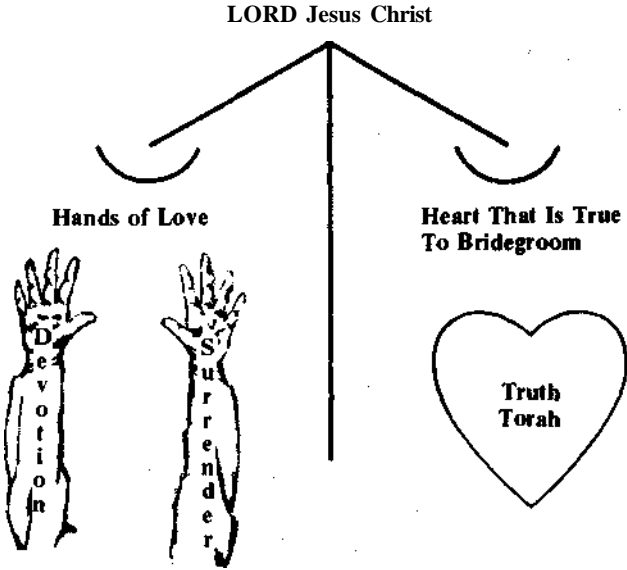
The LORD Jesus Christ fills His Bride, who is striving and desiring to please Him and do that which is right, with the particular kind of grace and truth that satisfies and makes the heart happy.

The LORD's scales are balanced. He gives an equal measure of His overflowing gracious love with His overflowing truth of loyalty and faithfulness in the heart. *Khehsed love* is complete devotion and surrender to another. Jesus Christ had this kind of loving devotion and surrender to His heavenly Father. He desires to give us an increase of His gracious love as His Christmas present to us so that we might feel the overflowing thrill of devotion and surrender to Him. Remember, He gives us the energy of His love so that we may use this energy, in us, in lifting up His holy Name. The gracious love of Jesus is balanced with loyalty truth in the heart. His love does not run off in an unbalanced situation like the crooked, deceitful love of humans, who know not how or when to refuse wishes and desires that hinder their goal to the New City and their true happiness. The gift of His gracious good love always overflows toward truth, to be joined in perfect, harmonious balance.

His ruling gracious love also mixes much denial of our wants and desires that would produce a deteriorating effect. May Jesus give you a fresh, fruitful portion of His blessed gift of grace and truth at this season. May I take this time to wish you a blessed and holy Christmas, filled with love and prayers for a new bestowal of His precious gift of grace and truth. May our blessed LORD grant unto us at this Christmas a new portion of the energy of His gracious

love so we can use that energy in complete devotion and complete surrender to Him in the coming year, and a new portion of His faithful, stable truth so that our hearts might be filled with loyalty and faithfulness to the Bride, the *Torah*.

May our scales look like this:



The deeds we do now, from His grace and truth, are beautiful buds that will blossom into the fullness of their glory, beauty, and fragrance in the New City!

STICKING WITH THE SHIP

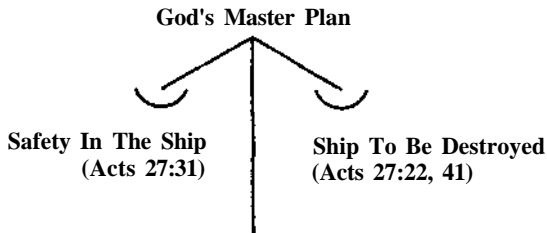
Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.... And the rest, some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land (Acts 27:31,44).

The Apostle Paul was on his way to Rome, as a prisoner, when a great storm arose. The ship was exceedingly tossed with the tempest. There were neither sun nor stars appearing for many days. All hope for being saved out of the storm was lost. The angel of God appeared unto Paul, saying that God had given him his life and the lives of all that sailed with him.

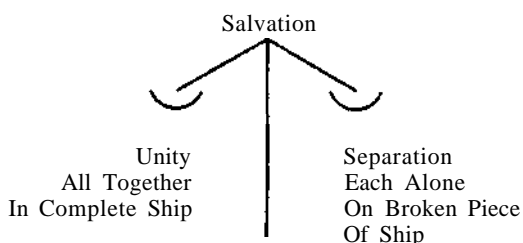
There are some precious lessons here. First, the servant of God who goes about the LORD's business will encounter fierce storms. It is not all "sunny sailing" on the sea of life. Storms are blessings in disguise. When the storms are received under the headship of God, they increase our faith and rest in God.

Second, the LORD's angel is ready to appear to His servant in the midst of the storm, bringing comfort and cheer. The angel assured Paul of *life* for himself and the others in the midst of certain destruction and death.

Third, the angel brought a paradoxical truth and revealed to Paul that the only life and safety was in the ship, and yet the ship was to be destroyed.



God's master plan always is beautiful and different. God used the ship to preserve lives in the storm and to carry people to the shore. When the ship had served God's purpose, He allowed the ship to break in pieces so that each person could have a broken piece of board from the ship on which to ride safely to the shore. This experience of the Apostle Paul reveals God's salvation in unity and separation.



Fourth, as a result of suffering through the unity and separation in the storm, the Apostle Paul brought the gospel and the miraculous healing power of the LORD Jesus Christ to the island of Melita. God's master plan leads through unity and separation in storms, but if we will cling to the "Ship of Zion," even a small piece of it will bear us safely to shore and give us the opportunity to share the glorious message of the Bridegroom and Bride with those the "piece of board" leads us to.

The moral of this lesson, dearly beloved, is to hold on the "Ship of Zion."

THE PRECIOUS OINTMENT OF UNITY

Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore (Psalm 133:1-3).

The Psalmist expresses the delightful bliss that awaits the Bride-believers when they are united as one on Christ's Tiphereth Wheel of Unity.

When Israel dwelt together as one, it was good and beneficial for her spiritually, socially, and nationally. She enjoyed mutual happiness and vitality. Remember, we cannot slander our brother or sister without slaying ourselves at the same time. The truth of these precious verses is able to lift us above the present disease of our own resentments and the present sorrows of all disunity and disharmony.

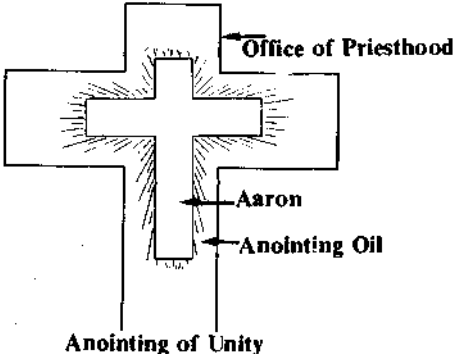
We should be deeply grateful to God that we work in a place where we share the same spiritual convictions, the same principles of spiritual truth, and the same spiritual vision of the prize, the New City. How blessed it is to dwell together in spiritual unity on these eternal points.

Let us forget the disunity that is generated from different backgrounds, different degrees of natural understanding, and different degrees of human ignorance! When we are on the Tiphereth Wheel of Christ, with our eyes focused on Him, we rally

around Him. Then we will know the goodness of the LORD and the the pleasant side of each other. This is our inheritance in Christ Jesus. Let us claim our inheritance of unity!

God purposed that Israel dwell together on the Tiphereth Wheel with a stream of the anointing oil of unity flowing through each of them, joining them to each other and anointing them to minister to one another in peace and love.

This beautiful truth is personified through the anointing oil which was poured upon Aaron's head and which ran down his beard, even to the hem of his garment. The anointing oil joined the person of Aaron to the office of the priesthood and anointed him to minister before the LORD God in the behalf of the people.



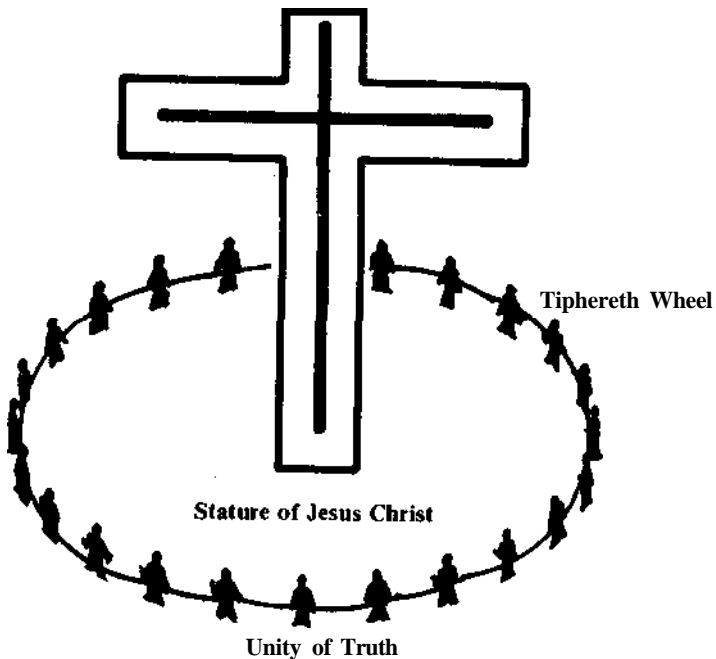
Likewise, the dew of Mount Hermon flowed down upon the land of Israel, joining it in a unity of moisture and anointing it to become exceedingly fruitful.



The dew of Hermon unified the land of Israel in moisture and fruitfulness. Furthermore, in the millennium reign of Christ, the waters of the *Torah* will flow down upon Mount Zion from Christ Jesus, joining each person in Israel to each other and uniting them in the spiritual truth of the *Torah*.

Moreover, the LORD Jesus Christ desires to do the same thing for us now. We have the full stature of Christ's truth in our midst overflowing with the anointing oil of His Spirit, with the dew of His corrective Word, and the waters of His *Torah*. Therefore, we have no excuse to be in disharmony or disunity. Let us confess our resentments and repent of that which prevents us from taking our place on His Tiphereth Wheel of Unity.

Let us not be guilty when we stand before Christ for not finding our place on the Tiphereth Wheel and of not allowing His Truth to unite us as one.



HIDE GOD'S WORD IN YOUR HEART

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

This Psalm consists of twenty-two stanzas which relate to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Each stanza consists of eight verses all beginning with the same Hebrew letter in turn until the alphabet is completed.

Our verse for thought today is found in the second stanza under the Hebrew letter *beth*, meaning a house.

Some in the Psalmists day had rejected God's *Torah* as a spiritual house in which to dwell and had condemned the Word, the Holy One of Israel. However, the Psalmist declared boldly his love and loyalty to God's *Torah* by safeguarding the precious holy treasure of the *Torah* in his heart.

The Hebrew word for the *word* that the Psalmist kept in his heart indicates the teaching, instruction, and explanation that had been given him of the revelation of God's holy *Torah* and how to apply its moral principles in his everyday life.

It is great to memorize God's Word, but if we do not understand its moral principles and how to apply them in our everyday life, we are not utilizing the full intent and purpose of God's Word. If we will first seek to acquire for ourselves the revelation of the moral principles of God's holy Word and allow Him to help us implement them in our everyday life, we will be kept from sinning against God. The understanding of the theoretical revelation of God's moral principles and the empirical knowledge that comes through their implementation in our lives are the

restraining force that will prevent us from sinning against God. The *beth* or "house" of understanding and knowledge of God's Word is a strong house that will prevent the enemy of sin from entering our hearts. If we store God's Word in the *beth* or house of understanding and knowledge, it will be safe from the thieves and robbers, and it will be ready for use when it is God's will for us to use it.

With the understanding and knowledge of God's Word in our hearts, we can overcome every temptation as our Owner and Master, Jesus Christ, did on the Mount of Temptation.

The understanding and knowledge of God's Word overpowers the dominion of sin, the allurements of iniquity, and the menacing threatenings of wickedness.

We can successfully oppose all resisting forces of God's enemies through the understanding and knowledge of His holy Word.

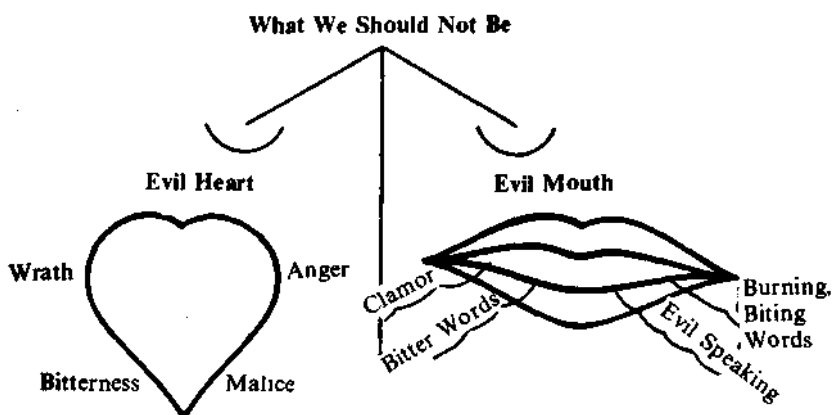
WHAT WE SHOULD NOT BE

AND

WHAT WE SHOULD BE

And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you (Ephesians 4:30-32).

God has exhorted us to not grieve the Holy Spirit with the evil in our heart or the evil in our mouth.



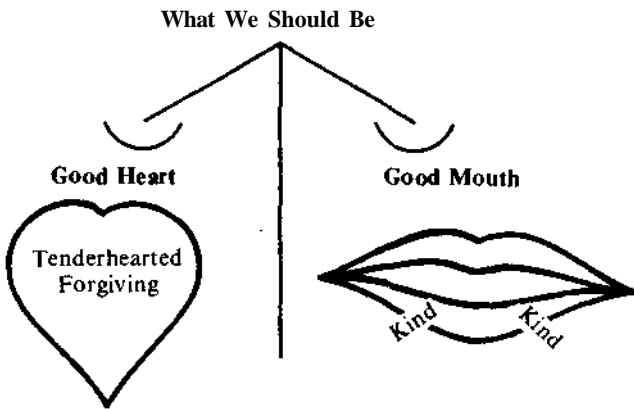
The evil in our heart and the evil in our mouth annoy and harass the holy nature of the Holy Ghost. The evil in our heart and mouth causes the Holy Spirit of God sorrow and pain of mind, and it wounds His holy feelings.

The corrupt passions of our heart produce corrupt communications out of our mouth. If there is a bitter, sour, disagreeable attitude in the heart, the words out of the mouth will be biting, severe, harsh, and piercing.

If there is wrath and anger burning in the heart, the words out of the mouth will be scorching and searing, wounding the feelings of others, causing their joy to wither by the burning sarcasm.

When malice is reigning in the heart, it will be filled with an active ill will to do harm to others. The heart will be filled with a deep-seated animosity that delights in causing others to suffer and seeing them writhe in pain. Then the mouth will be filled with a continual vehement expression of noisy demands, critical complaints, loud out-cries of injustice, and loud, noisy opinions that roar out verdicts that everyone is partial.

When the heart is an evil cesspool, the mouth becomes an overflowing cesspool of corruption that grieves the Holy Spirit of God, deforms our spiritual growth, and defiles and hinders the effectual working of the body of Christ.



When we allow Jesus Christ to cleanse our hearts, our mouths will become clean too. When there is loving, tender and merciful caring in our hearts over the sufferings and distresses of others, our mouth will be full of kind words. When the heart is gentle, soft, sensitive and considerate to the needs of others, the mouth will speak sympathetic and friendly words to others.

God desires that our hearts be cleansed of all evil passions so it can be filled with forgiveness. We cannot forgive someone until we are willing to turn loose of our resentment against them. We cannot forgive until we willingly relinquish our desire to punish others. We cannot forgive until we are willing to cease being angry with others. When we are willing to give up all claim to punish others or to exact a penalty for their offense, Christ's blood will wash us, cleanse us, and fill us with His loving forgiveness. Then we can joyfully overlook the faults, errors, and failures of others. When Christ's forgiving love is ruling and reigning in our hearts, it is easy to cancel and remit the debts that we feel that others owe to us.

Beloved, why should we foolishly hold on to our evil passions that only bring death and destruction to us and to others? If God the Father forgives our sins for Christ's sake, how much more should we forgive the faults and failures of others for Christ's sake?

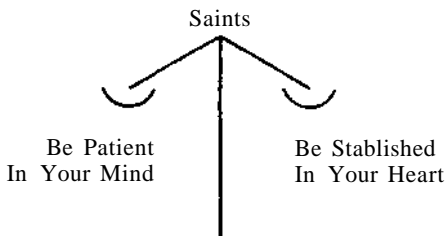
Therefore, we should forgive readily, heartily, and sincerely for Christ's sake. Remember, the outward condition of your mouth reveals the inward condition of your heart.

BE READY FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD

Let us look in the Book written by the Apostle James for our spiritual devotion.

Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; Stablish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh (James 5:7,8).

The Apostle, by the Spirit of God, exhorts us to do two things in order to be ready for the coming of the LORD.



I. BE PATIENT IN YOUR MIND

To be patient means supporting pain, trials, sufferings, adversities without murmuring, fretting, and taking revenge.

A patient mind is one that is calm and composed, not hasty or impetuous, not easily provoked, not revengeful against injuries. A patient mind is lenient, calmly diligent, and constantly persevering in actions and good deeds.

Therefore, we should bear our sufferings and afflictions without murmurings and our injuries and persecutions without revenge. God desires to lengthen and elongate our patience until it becomes long-suffering. After we have faithfully done our work, we need to patiently wait for our reward. The spiritual patience of Christ Jesus is our humble acquiescence to God's will and the Father's master plan, and an eye of faith to His glorious recompense.

II. BE STABLISHED IN YOUR HEART

To be stablished in your heart means that the heart is permanently fixed and sufficiently settled in its choice to serve God that it cannot be influenced or acted upon by external influences or situations. The heart is healthy when it is stablished. When the heart is firmly fixed on God, the LORD encircles it with His everlasting covenant.

When the heart is sufficiently stablished in the LORD, it is firm and unwavering in its practice of good in the midst of sufferings and temptations.

When our hearts are firmly fixed on the LORD, we do not stumble over the temporal prosperity of the wicked, as the temporal sufferings and afflictions of the righteous. Beloved, ask Jesus to help you be patient in your mind and stablished in your heart so that you may be ready for the soon coming for the LORD Jesus Christ.

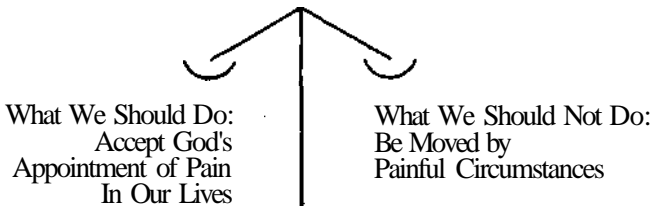
WHAT WE SHOULD NOT DO

AND

WHAT WE SHOULD DO

No man should be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto (I Thessalonians 3:3).

This verse tells us what we should not do and what we should do.



I. WHAT WE SHOULD NOT DO

We should not move, budge, or turn around from a quiet and peaceful trust in the LORD during our painful trials. Our internal agitation, rising up, and our troubled spirit are firm witnesses from within that we have been moved away from our strong position of

confidence that all things are working together for our good. It is so easy to allow our flesh and the Devil to move us away from God's perfect will for us, which is to give thanks in everything.

There are certain precious plants in our spiritual garden which cannot attain perfection under the continual shining of the sun of prosperity in our lives. Because God desires a most fruitful crop of humility, kindness, gentleness, and meekness from the soil of our human heart, He gives us painful, dark nights known as trials and tribulations. This is where we find the "humility moonlight" of the humble nature of the Crucified Christ that will help us put forth these precious fruits of humility. If God sent the sunshine of prosperity all the time, the soil of our hearts would soon become a proud, dry, and hard desert, void of the tender, fruitful plants of humility, kindness, meekness, and gentleness. When we have passed through great nights of pain, trials, and tribulations and have learned not to be moved and not to turn around, we emerge with the precious, tender fruits of His mercy and grace to share with others.

Beloved, until we learn what not to do when God has enrolled us in the little "red school house" of suffering, we will wile away our time by looking out the windows, waiting for the bell to ring so we can be released and return to our pleasurable home of prosperity and sunshine. But, thank God for His faithful tutors and governors, the Word and the Spirit, which force us to return to getting our "homework" done and learning our lessons.

We became grateful for the natural schoolmaster and schoolmistress in our lives after we grew up and learned to appreciate our education. However, before we grew up, we often abhorred them and dreaded them because they forced us to study when we wanted to play.

Likewise, Christ, the Word and the Spirit of God, as a faithful Tutor and Governor, has forced us to study in the painful night season in the "little red Schoolhouse" of suffering, moving us forward in our spiritual education and moral development.

When we learn our lessons of what not to do and we grow up, we are eternally grateful for the hard lessons we learned from God's

divine "textbook" of pain. We are taught of Him how to be in subjection to the Father of spirits Who has chastened us for our profit and gain and Who has corrected us, turning us from the world and the death of the flesh unto His divine truth and His eternal life.

The tears of those who suffer according to the will of God are God's divine "windows of light" from heaven, and they will lead us to His eternal throne and to His eternal day. The sweetest fragrances in the natural realm are only obtained by the greater pressures and squeezings. Likewise, in the spiritual realm, the sweetest fragrances of Christ are only obtained through the greatest pressures and squeezings which He uses to bring us into a new union with the Crucified Christ.

II. WHAT WE SHOULD DO

There is a proper way to accept the painful circumstances of life. First, if we learn how to accept pleasure, it will be easy to properly accept pain. The proper acceptance of pleasure is to recognize that we do not deserve God's mercy that brought the day of pleasure. God gives us days of pleasure for His Name's sake so we can be thankful to His Name, by lifting it up in a greater way. It is easy to see when we have not properly accepted our day of pleasure. We are taken up with the carnal feeling that we have earned it, and we are completely absorbed with the joy of the gift instead of lifting up the Name of the LORD, the Giver. When we take our delight in the gifts and in the blessings that we have received instead of lifting up the LORD's holy Name, we are very discouraged and resentful after the LORD removes the gifts and blessings of our day season.

Consequently, because we have established the proud, erroneous thought that we deserved what we received, it is easy for this same proud thought to continue ruling on the pain side of the scales by vehemently declaring that we do not deserve the painful night season in our lives.

Yes, pride is blind and vicious. Let us pray for Jesus Christ to cleanse us from all evil, proud thoughts through this precious blood,

through the fire of the Holy Ghost, and through the waters of His Name, death, and life. Then, we will see clearly what we should not do and what we should do. We should not be moved. Therefore, by God's grace, let us stand and not be moved from our trust and confidence in the LORD in our painful night seasons. Let us do what we should do by humbly accepting all things He has appointed for us. Let us be faithful in choosing not to waste our time in the "little red Schoolhouse." Let us learn our lessons! Let us not flunk our grades. Then we can do what we should do and not do what we should not do.

HOW TO PLEASE THE LORD

One of the greatest Psalms in the Bible is Psalm 100. This brief little Psalm is the finale of the ascension group of Psalms which begins with Psalm 93. Psalm 100 summarizes the instructive information contained within these eight Psalms.

These are Messianic Psalms which relate to the restoration of Israel in the millennium and describe the praise and the thanksgiving that will be brought unto the LORD at that time, while He sits upon His throne in the Temple in Jerusalem. God will invite all peoples of the earth to join with Israel in worship to God, during the millennial reign of Christ Jesus. God desires for the whole world to join Israel in praise and thanksgiving to Him, and to serve Him with gladness, and joining together as one to do His will.

The millennial reign of Christ will bring an end to erring mankind's protracted resistance to God's sovereign rule and reign. In that day, the LORD Jesus Christ will no longer only remain the one on *high* at the Father's right hand, but His supreme sovereignty and majesty will be in the midst of mankind here *below*, where He will be acknowledged as King of Kings and LORD of LORDS. The LORD Jesus Christ is the sole Being Who has purchased man's salvation. When He comes the second time to earth, He will be recognized by all men as He stands before them in all the invincible strength of His will and in all the power of His might. In that day, it will be clear to all that His divine goals and His purposive will can no longer be dismissed as irrelevant and unimportant. Heretofore, the world of nature is the only one that has obeyed God's purposive will within His "El Shadday" fence.

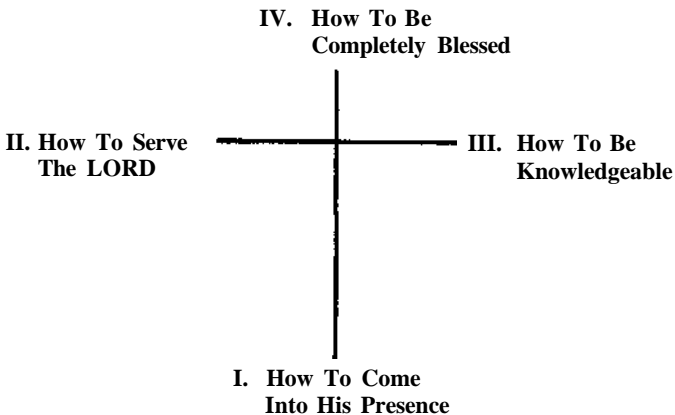
The world of mankind has disobeyed God's purposive will and has jumped over His El Shadday fence in order to pursue the tyranny of its own will. The world has plagued itself by continually casting down God's sovereign reign, so it could enthrone prideful flesh as a king.

However, when the LORD Jesus Christ rules and regulates the world during His millennial reign on the earth He will control all aspects of individual and communal life. He will subordinate everything to God's purposive will; therefore, all human tyranny and all vacillation of the human will shall cease and be brought to an end.

At that time, the world of mankind will enter and continue upon a definite, steady path of spiritual education and moral development within the fence of God's purposive will.

Then the LORD's lovingkindness and faithfulness will be enjoyed by all.

Let us consider a stature of truth concerning God's wise design and instructive teachings in Psalm 100 on how to please the LORD in worship and service to Him.



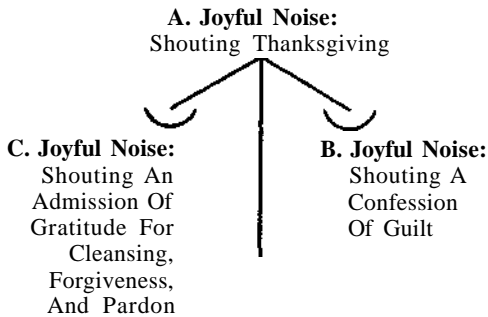
The first point, "How to Come Into His Presence," teaches us to learn the way of approach that is pleasing to the LORD.

I. HOW TO COME INTO HIS PRESENCE

This Psalm is a hymn of joyful, noisy thanksgiving. The Hebrew word for *thanksgiving* is *to-daw*, which has the threefold meaning of thanksgiving, confession, and admission. Jesus Christ, as our spiritual Judge, desires that we approach Him with a joyful, noisy sound in thanksgiving for His sacrifice at Calvary, in a joyful, noisy sound confessing our sins, and in a noisy sound admitting the cleansing, forgiving, and pardoning power of His omnipotent Name.

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.... Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name (Psalm 100:1,4).

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable. This Psalm reveals how God meant for His people to come into His presence in the past, how He intends for them to come into His presence in the future, and how He means for us to come into His presence today. Although we are always failing and coming short of the glory of God, He desires for us to come into His presence with a joyful noise because we have a Saviour Who is ready to listen, even to our confessions of fears and failures.



A. JOYFUL NOISE: Shouting Thanksgiving

When we approach the presence of the LORD Jesus Christ, we need to make a joyful noise by *thanking (to-daw)* Him for His love, for His grace, and for His kindness in dying for us, in our place and in our stead.

B. JOYFUL NOISE: Shouting Confession

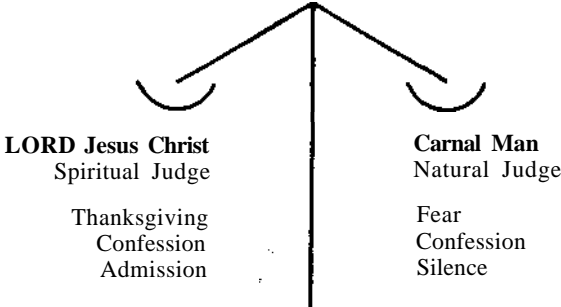
We need to make a joyful noise in *confessing (to-daw)* to the LORD Jesus Christ our sins, our guilt, and our offenses since the reason He died on the cross is to willingly forgive and pardon us.

C. JOYFUL NOISE: Shouting Admission

We need to make a joyful noise in thanking Him, gratefully *admitting (to-daw)* that His Name is omnipotent and that it is sufficient to help our knees to bow to Him in thanksgiving in every thing (Isaiah 45:23; Philippians 2:9-11; I Thessalonians 5:18).

God desires that our heart be filled with happy emotions and joyful expectations of the glorious gain of Christ's forgiveness and favor when we come into His presence. When the awareness of Christ's forgiving love fills our heart, there is a feeling of pleasurable and delightful expectations as we wait on our Saviour to cleanse and forgive us afresh and anew. When the heart is filled with this class of joyful expectation, it is an overflowing, merry noise or a loud sound of joyful conversation with the LORD. Therefore, with *noisy shouting* we should enter into His gates and courts with thanksgiving for His saving blood, giving thanks for the privilege of confessing our guilt, failures, faults, and shortcomings, and with gratitude for the cleansing power, the forgiving power, and the pardoning power of His sovereign, omnipotent Name.

The ways of our spiritual Judge contrast sharply with the ways of a natural judge.



How different is the approach of the guilty before a natural Judge from the approach of God's children to the spiritual Judge, Jesus Christ.

. The Fear Of The Natural Offender

When the offender in the natural approaches the natural Judge, he is filled with the feelings of fear, anxiety, agitation, and apprehension at the presence of the Judge, and of the judgment which that Judge will pronounce upon him, if he is found guilty.

. The Confession Of The Guilty Offender

When a natural judge or interrogator extracts a confession of guilt from a fearful offender, the fearful offender is condemned and punished by the natural judge.

. Silence Of The Offender

If the fearful offender is adamantly silent about his guilt, and if there is no evidence presented against him, his case is dismissed.

Conversely, though, in the spiritual realm, it is only when the guilty person stubbornly refuses to confess his sin and his guilt to the LORD Jesus Christ that he is severely punished by the spiritual Judge. If one confesses to the LORD, the spiritual Judge, he is cleansed, forgiven, and pardoned. In the natural realm, confession brings punishment, and deceitful silence is the only sad recourse. We are to come into the LORD's presence with joyful, noisy thanksgiving for the LORD's love and mercy. We are to joyfully confess our offenses so we can receive cleansing, forgiveness, and pardon. We are to be joyfully grateful that we have a Saviour to come to. We are to joyfully admit that His Name has all power to save us and deliver us from all offending things.

We also are to come before His presence with singing, "...come before his presence with singing" (Psalm 10:2).

We are to celebrate, extol, proclaim, and describe the glorious majesty of the LORD's holy Name by singing praises unto His Name.

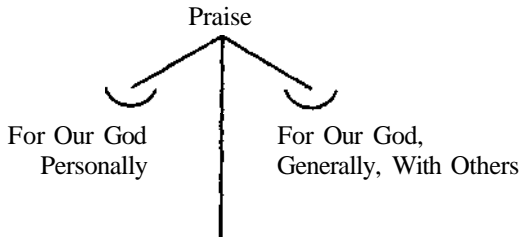
After we have been cleansed, forgiven, and pardoned, we are to assume a new and higher, joyous frame of mind. This Psalm instructs us not to hide our feelings of joy and gladness when we come into God's presence. We are not to cover the cheerful emotions and the pleasurable, joyful feelings and satisfaction that the redemptive Word and works of Christ have wrought in our hearts. If we have come to God's house with a joyful noise, confessing our faults and failures, how much greater our joyful noise should be after Christ's Word and works have generated new, lively sentiments of gladness in our hearts. Therefore, we should not cover up and hide this new gladness from Christ, but we should allow this new gladness of heart and great joy of mind to overflow in worship, praise, and thanksgiving by lifting up the LORD's Name in the singing of happy songs.

We are to come before His presence with thanksgiving, praise, and blessing. "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto Him and bless his name" (Psalm 100:4).

When we enter the first door of God's house, we should be thankful to the LORD Jesus Christ for His great and gracious works of redemption. When we contemplate the mighty works of Christ's redemption in our heart and life, a fresh new awareness of what He means to us fills our heart and mind. From this fresh new awareness, then, a lively and joyful gratitude is generated in our heart and mind and begins radiating upward to our precious LORD.

A fresh new discovery of what Christ Jesus means to us fills our hearts with fresh new praises unto His holy Name. As we ascend in His holy presence with a revitalizing new discovery of His meaningfulness to us, we also find a new and joyful praise filling our heart for the light of His truth.

Additional new joyful praise is generated in our mind and heart by contemplating the light of truth that He is our own God *personally* and that He is our God *in general* with others.



Before we can properly praise God generally with others in the congregation, we first must praise Him personally, by accepting, feeling, and knowing that He is the Governor and Guide of every aspect of our lives. It is criminal blasphemy, spiritually, to stand in the congregation, joining in praise and song, singing: "I surrender All," "All Hail the Power of Jesus Name," "Where He Leads Me I Will Follow," while in our personal world we stand indifferently aloof in our tiny personality denying Him His rightful place as the Owner and Master of our life and our destiny.

In the light of truth, let us first praise Him personally as the Owner, the Master, the Governor and the Guide of all aspects of our life, and then let us join together in joyful praise to Him as the Owner, the Master, the Governor and the Guide of the whole congregation. The Devil's pernicious design is to either coerce us to remain a solitary with our personal praise and not join the congregation, or to coerce us to join the congregation in praise while we stand aloof and refuse to praise Him in our personal life.

As we ascend on the proper stairway into His holy presence, we will be empowered to give the highest form of praise, which is blessing His holy Name.

The blessing of the LORD's holy Name consists of hallowing it and consecrating it, justifying it as holy, just, and righteous in all the situations and circumstances that He permits to come our way. The blessings of the Name of the LORD is a demonstration of our approval of the methods and ways that He uses to accomplish His purposive will in our life.

When we, through the precious blood of Jesus Christ, ascend into the Holy of Holies, we will be able to recognize and to recite before the LORD a portion of the majesty, glory, kindness, goodness, and mercy of His holy Name in all things! We will be able to lift up the Name of the LORD in the highest form of praise and worship by blessing His righteous, holy Name in all things.

The second point on the main stature of truth is "How to Serve the LORD." We must learn the kind of service that is pleasing to Him.

II. SERVE THE LORD WITH GLADNESS

God's Word reveals how we are to serve the LORD in order to please Him. We are to come before the LORD's presence with cheerful obedience, and joyful, reverent honor to Him. We are to serve Him by happily performing our duties to Him from a willing heart. The LORD's service is not a tiresome and troublesome duty,

but a rejoicing of the heart (Psalm 19:8). It does not please the LORD for man to serve Him as the Owner and as the Master out of a constant, slavish fear of punishment. God desires for His beloved people to serve Him as their gracious and loving Father from joyful and confident hearts as obedient children.

Obedient, loving, and joyful service is to be performed not only in the house of God, but in the process of moment to moment living in our personal lives. To serve God with gladness means to willingly dedicate all of our energies, means, and talents every moment of our lives to His purposive will.

How wonderful it will be when all creation has been made to bow on their knees in humble submission to the LORD and to dedicate themselves to the solemn, divine service of giving honor and praise to the LORD's holy Name (Revelation 5:13).

Serving the LORD with gladness helps us to retain the feeling that we are making constant and steady growth in our spiritual education and in our moral development. This blissful and joyful service unto the LORD is not affected or changed in any manner by the outward circumstances and situations which life may bring. Thus, we should not serve God out of slavish fear, which makes service to God a laborious burden, but out of humility faith and loving truth that makes His service a joy and rejoicing to the heart!

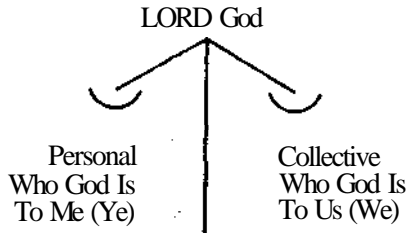
If we serve the LORD with gladness in our personal, everyday life, a full heart will be a faithful companion to us, accompanying us to the house of the LORD, preparing us to truly join the congregation of the righteous in serving the LORD with gladness in His house.

The third point on the main stature of truth, "How To Be Knowledgeable of God," is to learn the personal relationship with God and to learn the collective relationship with God.

III. HOW TO BE KNOWLEDGEABLE OF GOD

Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we our selves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture (psalm 100:3).

"How To Be Knowledgeable" consists of learning who God is to *me* (ye) and who God is to *us* (we).



It is important to lay stress on the opposition of this cardinal doctrine between *ye* (me) and *us* (we). First, before I (ye) can enter into the sanctuary of the LORD God and become a part of the *us* and *we*, I (ye) must understand that the LORD is God: the Owner, the Master, the Creator, the Lawmaker, the Lawgiver, the Ruler, and the Regulator of my (your) personal life. If I (ye) deny God the lawful right of these functions in my personal life, I am not in any condition to assume a harmonious place in the collective body of Christ.

Second, after I (ye) have understood God's relationship to me (ye), I (ye) am ready to humbly accept my (ye) position as one of the many creatures that He has made: "He has made us." *We* are His creatures through and through because *He has made us* through and through. We owe neither the most insignificant part of our being nor the most trivial part of our existence to the work of ourselves, because He has made us. Therefore, *we are His*. *We* are

His collective possession. Since He is the Owner, He has the legal right of possession to us and all that pertains to us. Because He is the Creator and the Owner, He holds the lawful title to us. We created neither our spirit and soul nor our body.

We also have not created mankind. So, we should not try to rule over ourselves or over mankind, since He is the Creator and the Owner. *We are His*. Therefore, we are totally dependent upon Him for our existence and the maintenance of our existence in the fullest sense. When we understand who God is to *us*, we accept complete dependence on God *for ourselves* as our collective Creator and the common Ruler and Regulator of our lives in the congregation.

Collective knowledge of who God is to *us* instructs us that God is no respecter of persons because *we* are the *sheep* of His pasture. God created us, and since then He has never abandoned us to spiritual hunger or put us under the rule and reign of the angels to provide for us our spiritual food. Instead, He has provided us tender, rich, living pastures in His precious Holy Word. "We are the sheep of His pasture." He is the good and gracious Shepherd Who makes *us* to lie down in green pastures and leadeth *us* besides still waters. So, if He has *made us*, and *we* are *His people*, and *the sheep of His pasture*, then I (ye) must not conceive an idolatrous idea and take on a "hoity toity" spirit as though I (ye) am the only creature and the only woolly lamb in the whole pasture.

Clearly, then, we must permit Him to be the Ruler and Regulator of our lives collectively and take over the special guidance of our lives collectively in His kingdom. How beautiful and precious it is to understand who God is personally (I - ye) and who He is collectively (us - we).

The fourth point of the main stature of truth, "How To Be Completely Blessed," is to learn how to bless His Name.

IV. HOW TO BE COMPLETELY BLESSED

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

We can live completely blessed by building upon a joyful and grateful relationship personally and collectively with the LORD and by striving after the sole, absolute good that is found only in the LORD. We are completely blessed by His gift of every breath that we breathe. These blessings are precious gifts of the LORD's lovingkindness to us. We are completely blessed by the LORD's great faithfulness unto us, in which He trains us and guides us from the paths of error and sinful sorrow to the paths of truth and joyful gratitude. Great is Thy faithfulness, Oh God our Father, both now and forever more!

It is our fresh experiences of the untiring goodness, loving mercy, and great faithfulness of God that enable us to bless His holy Name as bright shining lights, as fragrant beautiful gardens, and as fresh, lively, overflowing streams in the present evil world. The LORD's goodness, mercy, and faithfulness are constant expressions of the generosity of His love unto all generations. The LORD has proven in the past His faithful adherence to His precious Word by fulfilling all the obligations of His promises contained therein. The LORD's faithfulness constitutes a secure support for our happy trust now, and a perpetual theme for joyful thanksgiving that generates the highest form of blessing His holy Name.

We are completely blessed through the LORD's goodness, mercy, and faithfulness which causes us to bless His holy Name in all things! Let us come before His presence at this Thanksgiving season as living pillars of His goodness, as remarkable monuments of His mercy, and as living epistles of His great faithfulness to bless His holy Name.

Let us come into His presence this Thanksgiving with His "thankful tower" of truth, giving honor and blessing to His holy Name.

A TRUE FRIEND

In our lives, we like to feel we have good friends. Friends are important to us, and we also like to feel we are a friend to others. But what characteristics constitute a *true* friend? The Word of God has much to say about the subject of being a *true friend*. One Hebrew word for friend is *aw-hab*, meaning to have affection, love like a friend, an intimate acquaintance or associate; one who is attached to another by sentiments of affection, respect and esteem. A friend is one who is not hostile; he is a supporter or companion in arms, one who is reconciled with another, a companion, an associate, an attendant. As one who is favorable, he supports or promotes a cause, object, or institution.

A beautiful stature of truth concerning this kind of friend is found in the Book of Proverbs.

Faithful Are The Wounds Of A True Friend

(Proverbs 27:6)

A True Friend Loves
At All Times
(Proverbs 17:17)

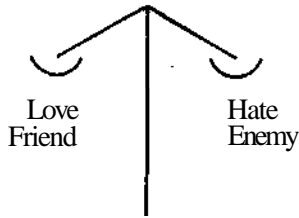
A True Friend Sticks
Closer Than a Brother
(Proverbs 18:24)

A True Friend (Love)
Covers All Sins
(Proverbs 10:12)

I. A TRUE FRIEND COVERS ALL SINS

The first point on the stature of truth concerning a true friend is that he is love personified and that he covers all sins.

Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love (friend) covereth all sins
(Proverbs 10:12).



Hate or an enemy makes mountains out of mole hills, but love or a true friend puts out of sight or covers the insults, wrongs, and transgressions of others.

Enmity, hate, and malice are great strife-makers. An enemy seeks and searches for occasions to stir up strife in order to promote the Devil's kingdom. The spiteful enmity of the flesh takes pleasure in bearing tales, in producing wicked misrepresentations, and in making evil surmises. A heart that is filled with hatred and enmity takes great pleasure in digging up the smoldering coals of contention and blowing them up into new flaming tongues set on fire of Hell, and then this enemy takes great pleasure in warming his hands at the Devil's Antichrist-fire.

But a friend (love - *awhab*) is a peacemaker who finds his pleasure in covering all discord, disunity and disharmony with the precious Blood of Jesus. A true friend conceals all offenses and wrongs that would prevent peace and harmony among relations. A true friend will not proclaim or aggravate an offense but will cover and conceal it. A true friend will excuse the mistakes and errors that others make out of ignorances, weaknesses, and blindnesses. A true

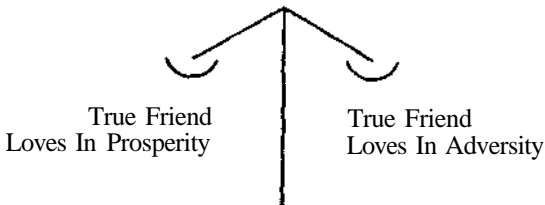
friend does not imagine ill intentions when there are none, but he will recognize many offenses as careless oversights.

Therefore, a true friend willingly overlooks the offense and gives God the glory and praise due His Name in the situation. Thus strife is prevented, and peace is extended. Praise the LORD for our true Friend, The LORD Jesus Christ, and those who have learned to be like Him!

II. A TRUE FRIEND LOVES AT ALL TIMES

A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity (Proverbs 17:17).

The second point on the stature of truth concerning a true friend is that he loves at all times. A true friend is like a brother that loves or retains strong affections and constant devotion, even during the times of one's adversities. A true friend retains his affection and love in adversity *and* in prosperity.



It takes the occasions of prosperity and adversity to severely test a friendship.

There are some people who appear to be a friend when one is prosperous, successful, flourishing, and thriving because it puffs up their pride to be attached to such an exalted one. But when the prosperous one suffers some serious kind of adversity, distress, calamity, or catastrophe, the fair-weather-friend disappears,

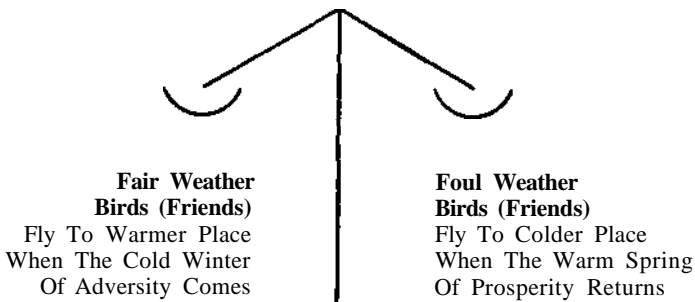
because he does not wish to have his bright, glorious and exalted image marred or tarnished by such humiliating things.

However, there are others who are diametrically different from the fair-weather-friend, because they enjoy being a foul-weather-friend. When they find someone who is down in the humble place of adversity, they gladly rush to their rescue, because they enjoy the happy feeling of superiority and exaltation before the poor one. But, when God changes the situation of the poor one by removing his adversity and by bringing him back to a place of prosperity and exaltation, the foul-weather-friend becomes jealous and angry because he has been robbed of his happy feelings of superiority and exaltation.

But a true friend is loyal, faithful, and loving, both in prosperity and in adversity. A true friend is constantly concerned about his friend in all situations.

The affections of the fair-weather-friend and the foul-weather-friend change as quickly as the wind and the weather. When one is sinfully selfish in his friendships, he ceases loving when his friend no longer pleases his feelings or serves his interest and desires.

Foul-weather-friends react like birds to unpleasant situations.



If the cold north winds of adversity are blowing in one's spiritual winter season, the fair-weather-fowls (friends) fly south to warmer situations. Then there are the foul-weather-fowls who when the south winds of prosperity are blowing in one's spiritual spring and summer seasons, they fly, as it were, to the north, hiding behind the facade of their icy, cold attitude.

A true friend is to be highly esteemed and valued, because he is constant in prosperity or in adversity.

Jesus Christ is a true Friend that loves us at all times, both in prosperity and in adversity. We should strive to be a true friend like Jesus. We should love Him in prosperity and in adversity. Likewise, we should love our friends as a true friend in prosperity and in adversity. If our friends have been blessed with prosperity, let us be glad and joyful with them. If they have suffered adversities, let us suffer and sorrow with them.

Let us examine our motives in our relationships with our friends. Are we trying to use our friends' prosperity for an exalted ride, or are we taking advantage of our friends' adversities by playing the superior role of an exalted one?

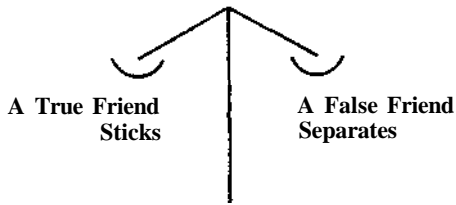
Let us study to be like Jesus so we can be a true friend, and love like a true friend at all times.

III. A True Friend Sticketh Closer Than a Brother

The third point on the stature of truth concerning a true friend is that he will stick closer than a brother.

A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24).

The Hebrew connotation says in this verse that there are friends that one hath to his own hurt; but there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.



When one indiscriminately multiplies his friends, he will gain false friends to his own hurt. There are those who are friends as long as they can eat at one's table. However, these are false friends, and they will continue in the day of one's affliction and adversity. False friends pretend friendship, but they do not hesitate to do harm and injury to their friends, when it is to their personal advantage to do so.

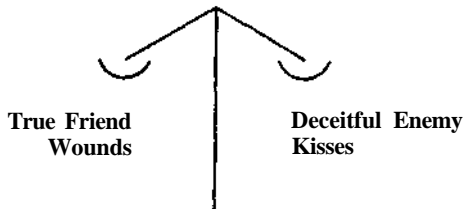
However, a true friend, a genuine friend sticketh closer than a brother.

In our afflictions and adversities, we expect comfort and consolation from our relations in the natural. Howbeit, we are often sadly disappointed because we have poured upon us, instead, their censorious criticisms and contempt. But how glorious and precious it is to have our blessed LORD as our true Friend (and to have those precious ones that He has raised up to be our true friends) to comfort and console us in our prosperity and adversity. A true friend sticks closer than a brother, with his bonds of love and esteem which are priceless, both in prosperity and adversity

IV. A TRUE FRIEND IS FAITHFUL TO WOUND

The fourth point on our stature of truth concerning a true friend is the faithfulness of a true friend to wound.

Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful (Proverbs 27:6)



A true friend is faithful to give verbal castigation or wounds to his friend's face in order to help him correct his errors and faults. But an enemy gives deceitful kisses to one's *face*, while he gives stabbing wounds to one's *back*. A true friend has open love that reproves and rebukes one to his face for his faults. A true friend is concerned about curing his friend's disease, not pleasing his palate with juicy bits of flattery. The deep secret love of a true friend will wound his friend to his face. But the deep secret hatred of an enemy will give flattering kisses and caresses to one's face while he is stabbing and wounding his back with the sharp sword *of* his lying deceitful tongue.

Jesus is a perfect example of a *true Friend*. Judas is a complete example of an enemy with flattering kisses. Let us stand guard in our hearts and watch diligently for the "Judas' flesh", which we have inherited from Adam the first, that might rise up against our true Friend, Jesus, and against our being a true friend like Jesus. Let us take our deceitful, inimical flesh to Christ Jesus for crucifixion that we might be the true friend that Jesus desires us to be.

May the LORD deliver us from deceit in our hearts which causes us to flatter with our tongues and to give lying kisses with our lips to a person's face in order to ingratiate ourselves and to appear pleasant and attractive while we are wounding with our tongues and destroying with lying lips behind a person's back.

Let us ask Jesus to help us to be a true friend that covers the wrongs of others, that loves at all times, that sticks closer than a brother, and that is faithful to *wound the face* of our friend, not to *wound his back*.