

Volume 13
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PRICELESS
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Remember Lot's Wife

The story is familiar: God destroyed the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah in an act of holy judgment. Before destroying the cities, however, He provided angels to escort Lot and his family to safety. When the angels got the family on the outskirts of town, they commanded, "Run for your lives! And don't look back or stop anywhere in the valley!" (Genesis 19:17 NLT). Then the Lord rained down fire and burning sulfur from the sky, completely destroying Sodom and Gomorrah (vv. 24-25). Instead of running away as the angels ordered, Lot's wife looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt (v. 26).

Why did she look back? What was she looking for? Perhaps she was taken aback by the wonder of God's power. Maybe she was saddened over friends and family members that were still in the city. Or perhaps she was recalling all of the good times she had in the place where restraint was a foreign word. Whatever the reason, one thing is clear: she was looking back on her past; a past from which God had just mercifully delivered her and her family. And her past consumed her; the fiery ashes covering her and snuffing out her life. Remember Lot's wife.

Remember Lot's wife when you begin longing for "the good ol' days," when you used to hang out and act the fool with your friends. Remember Lot's wife when you begin thinking about that ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend you broke up with several years ago. Remember Lot's wife when you begin having second thoughts about the job God told you to quit and things seem a bit tight at your new gig. When your mind tries to take you in reverse after God has taken you forward, remember Lot's wife.

Lot's wife couldn't let go of her past either. She was drawn to it, like a moth to a bright light. She was attached to her possessions, friends and memories of her past life so much that she stopped moving forward in God's grace and mercy. Because she stopped to focus on her past – whether out of curiosity, fondness or sadness – she was unable to forge ahead into the future that God prepared for her. Instead of embracing the new start God had provided for her and her family, she looked back, and it cost her dearly. Her life abruptly ended, buried in the ashes of her past.

When God is moving you forward, don't look back. When His hand of deliverance arrives, keep pressing on. Remember, when He separates you from your past, He's also bringing you into your future. Your best days are ahead of you, not behind you. Let go of your past life and keep moving forward with God.

Jesus said, "If you cling to your life, you will lose it; but if you give up your life for me, you will find it" (Matthew 10:39 NLT). Jesus did not come to take away or diminish your life. He came to enhance it. "I am come," He said, "that [you] might have life, and that [you] might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

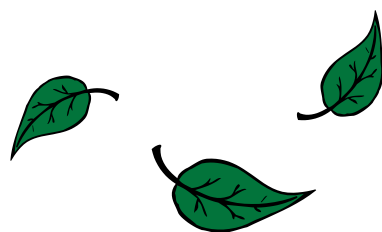
So if God is escorting you into your future, keep moving forward with Him, to the abundant life Jesus came to give you. Don't be fooled and don't be distracted. The life behind you is nothing compared to the life God has in front of you. Resist the temptation and the lure of your past, and don't look back. And whenever it seems too hard for you and you feel like giving in, hear these three words from the Master: "Remember Lot's wife" (Luke 17:32).



Fill in the blank. Ok. This issue's quiz is fairly easy. You will have multiple choices and all you need to do is to fill in the blank. Just a little general trivia based on the whole Bible. And don't forget for you Bible Thumpers (whatever that is, ☺) where's the Scripture text to prove it.

- That men may know that thou whose name alone is _____ art the most high over all the earth.
a. Immanuel b. Solomon c. Jehovah d. David
- I will _____ thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy _____;
a. praise, works b. love, hands c. worship, songs d. serve, steps
- For there is no _____ of persons with God.
a. honor b. respect c. praise d. condemnation
- Fret not thyself because of _____ men, neither be thou envious at the _____;
a. evil, wicked b. kind, loving c. servant, slothful d. strong, weak
- During the time of Malachi, the Israelites thought that serving God was _____.
a. difficult b. a privilege c. evil d. in vain
- And he said, 'The things which are impossible with men are _____.
a. the most trying b. a test from God c. possible with God d. overcome
- Set a watch, O Lord, before my _____; keep the door of my _____.
a. steps, feet b. family, house c. heart, soul d. mouth, lips
- "...in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in _____"
a. heaven b. Zion c. Jerusalem d. top of the mountains
- Behold, the _____ of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is _____.
a. fear, understanding b. name, freedom c. Truth, right d. way, life
- Many waters cannot quench _____, neither can the floods drown it:
a. hatred b. love c. jealousy d. hope

(Answers on page 3)



SELAH.
Pause and calmly think
about these.

REFLECTION

...As a man thinketh, so is He.



WE CAN'T BELIEVE GOD JUST BY HEARING, WE HAVE TO HEAR AND THEN HEAR AGAIN.
Talent or ability doesn't destroy yokes or remove burdens, the anointing does.

**The anointing on our life is not defined by our location or our circumstance.
To do what we don't have to do, takes faith.**

We can be in a bad place, a bad position and still be victorious.

The anointing brings out your haters.

We must not be afraid to mess up when we have a God who will
pick us up and clean us up.

FAILURE IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF SUCCESS.

Your hope belongs up!

We can't nice our way into God's presence.



Joy for the Spirit

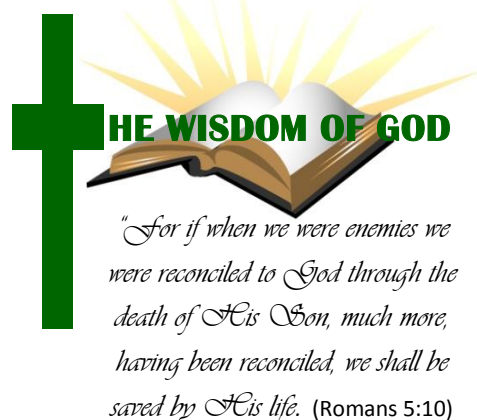
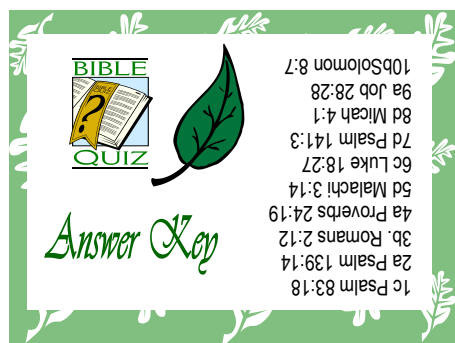
Triple Filter Test

In ancient Greece, Socrates was reputed to hold knowledge in high esteem. One day an acquaintance met the great philosopher and said, "Do you know what I just heard about your friend?" "Hold on a minute," Socrates replied. "Before telling me anything I'd like you to pass a little test. It's called the Triple Filter Test." "Triple filter?" "That's right," Socrates continued. "Before you talk to me about my friend, it might be a good idea to take a moment and filter what you're going to say. That's why I call it the triple filter test. The first filter is **Truth**. Have you made absolutely sure that what you are about to tell me is true?" "No," the man said, "Actually I just heard about it and..." "All right," said Socrates. "So you don't really know if it's true or not. Now let's try the second filter, the filter of **Goodness**. Is what you are about to tell me about my friend something good?" "No, on the contrary." "So," Socrates continued, "you want to tell me something bad about him, but you're not certain it's true. You may still pass the test though, because there's one filter left: the filter of **Usefulness**. Is what you want to tell me about my friend going to be useful to me?" "No, not really." "Well," concluded Socrates, "if what you want to tell me is neither true nor good nor even useful, why tell it to me at all?"

Ouch! I can hear the silence even in this newsletter. Pause and calmly think about that one. Sometimes we feel we have to share things with people and are in a rush to do so. Let us make sure we pause for a moment and put it through this simple test and ask ourselves honestly, will it edify? Will it build up? Will it encourage someone? If it doesn't do any of those, it's probably not worth repeating or not for you to repeat. Proverbs 20:19 says, "A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid anyone who talks too much." Don't let that anyone turn out to be you.



God's desire is that men pray everywhere. He wants us to pray without ceasing. We believe God and in His Word that tells us His will for our lives. God wants you to have life and that more abundantly. He wants you to be in health even as your soul prospers. We want you to know that we are praying God's will for you, but if you have any specific prayer requests feel free to email us at prayer@ongoodground.org, visit us on the web at www.ongoodground.org or give us a call at (609) 723-3425.



The Prayer of Salvation

Father God, I come to You in the name of Jesus. Your Word says, 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved' I confess with my mouth Jesus as Lord of my life and believe in my heart that You raised Him from the dead. And I believe that I am saved just as You have said. Thank You for coming into my heart. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.

The Gift of Righteousness

If you are a born-again believer, there is no use denying the truth: you are righteous. That's right, *you*. You are righteous not because of how you feel, but because of what God has said; not because of what you do, but because of what Jesus has done!

God's Word is truth (John 17:17), and the Word declares to all believers, "*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*" (2 Corinthians 5:17). To be "righteous" means you have right-standing with God, and this is true despite what you might have done. This is a difficult concept for our natural minds to accept because we are so accustomed to our standing in most every situation being linked to our behavior. Such thinking is faulty and directly contrary to the Word of God.

The Bible instructs us to cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ (2 Corinthians 10:5). The "obedience of Christ" is found in one place – at the Cross. For it was at the Cross that Jesus "humbled himself and became obedient unto death" (Philippians 2:8). It was at the Cross where He learned obedience through His suffering (see Hebrews 5:8). If you have any question in your mind about your righteousness, bring that thought to the Cross (*i.e.*, to the obedience of Christ) and let the Lord settle the matter for you.

At the Cross, Jesus paid the highest price so that you could exchange your sinful nature for His righteousness. In his letter to the Romans, Paul specifically noted that righteousness is a gift bestowed unto us through Jesus Christ (see Romans 5:17-18). Since it is a gift, it is not dependent on what you or I do – it is freely given. To receive it, we simply must believe in the atoning work of Jesus.

Romans 3:20-21 says: "*But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe.*"

In Romans 10:3-4, Paul writes: "*For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*"

Instead of thinking our own natural thoughts about our righteousness, we need to submit unto to God, casting down our high-minded notions and settling the matter at Calvary's Cross.

"But, you don't understand, how can I be righteous when I still do so many things wrong?!" Because your righteousness is not based on your conduct, it's based on Jesus' conduct! Jesus has made you righteous. No amount of good works that you could ever do would be enough to make you righteous. Besides, right conduct does not produce righteousness; righteousness produces right conduct. We must first accept the gift of righteousness, *then* we will enjoy the blessing of right living.

Note what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church: "Awake to righteousness and sin not" (1 Corinthians 15:34). The order is important. We must first "awake to" or accept God's gift of righteousness and then we will "sin not." Righteousness produces right living, not the other way around.

Beloved, let the Holy Spirit convict (or *convince*) you of your righteousness in Christ (John 16:7-8). Dig into the Word and hear what God's says about your right-standing with Him. Remember, it is by the obedience of one Man that many are made righteous (Romans 5:19), and that Man is Jesus Christ. Jesus paid the price for your righteousness and presents it to you as a gift. To receive it today, all you have to do is trust and believe the Word of God!



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Have you shared the Good News yet?

"But the ones that fell on good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience." - Luke 8:15



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By inspiration of The Holy Ghost.

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May the Lord God bless you in astonishing ways!

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The Wrong Kind of Fire



In Leviticus 10:1-2 we find, "And Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, took either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and put incense thereon, and offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord." Nadab and Abihu were priests whose priesthood had just begun. But just as quickly as it began, it ended violently at the hands of God. Their offense? They offered "strange fire" before the Lord. The New Living Translation says it was "the wrong kind of fire." What was wrong with it? The Bible does not specifically say, but God tells us all we need to know by saying it was fire "which He commanded them not." Nadab and Abihu decided on their own how they were going to worship and serve God, and it cost them their lives. They may have been sincere, but they were sincerely wrong. How about us? Do we worship God according to His will, or do we presume to "know" what He wants or requires? God will not accept any kind of worship or service from his people, so it is not enough that our hearts are "on fire" for the Lord. What matters is that we present the right kind of "fire," holy and acceptable unto God. Attempting to give Him anything else may lead to tragic consequences.