

Solution for Life



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 Dear Friends,

As fall draws to an end, we wanted to take some time to reflect on what the Lord has been saying to us and share truths that have been especially meaningful to each of us. It is our prayer you will take time to reflect on God and what He has meant to you this year. He is “The Alpha and the Omega, who is and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” (Rev 1:8) We trust you have been encouraged by the presence of our Almighty loving Savior throughout the year. It is our desire that you will be blessed by our ministry meant for you through the printed word in this newsletter. Dan and Jessie

Do You Now Believe? | by Daniel Westlund

The title of this article is the question that Jesus asked His disciples the night He was betrayed: “Do you now believe?” (John 16:31) This wasn’t the only time He asked them such a question, and if even the disciples needed to consider their answer, how much more do we? In II Corinthians 13:5, the Apostle Paul exhorts us to “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you unless of course, you fail the test?”

Do you believe Jesus is who HE claimed to be? “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us.” (John 1:1, 14) Jesus was God in human form. Born of the Virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, died upon the cross as a payment for our sins, was buried and rose again on the third day, ascended into heaven and is coming again. He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings. I ask this question because I find many people who sincerely believe they are children of God, but doubt that His Word (Bible) is the absolute truth and perfect. For when God’s Word does not agree with their lifestyle they question, hedge and attempt to change its

clear meaning to justify their unbelief. When hard times come, they question whether Jesus is who He really claimed to be or if He even cares about them. We must ask ourselves, do I believe Jesus is the way and the truth and the life and that no one comes to the Father except through Christ? (John 14:6) Do I believe that you must be born again to see God’s kingdom (go to heaven)? (John 3:3) Do I believe no one gets to heaven except through Christ? (Acts 4:12) Even in evangelical churches there are those who believe and teach that there is more than one way that leads to heaven and the Bible is outdated. Some publishers are creating paraphrased Bibles that do not correlate with the original language.

Do you believe that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible? Do you believe that without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him? (Hebrews 11:2, 6)

Do you believe “all Scripture (Bible) is God-breathed (God’s Word) and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in

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Solution for growth

The Next Right Thing | by Stephen & Tobey Westlund

Recently, I watched a message by Dr. David Jeremiah on the sufficiency of Christ for our lives in the days we live. Christ is more than enough! But how does the knowledge of this truth become evident in our lives on a daily basis? Dr. Jeremiah offered this simple advice: after you have prayed, spent time in the Word, and trusted the Lord for your day; when you go out to live your life, do the next right thing.

Before COVID, I was really good at planning, thinking about, and worrying about a hundred next things that might happen, but never will. But I wasn't very good at the next right thing. I was always trying to do the next 10 right things. Jesus didn't live this way. Consider when He fed the five thousand. His disciples came to Him and said, "Hey Jesus, it's supper time, should we send the people away to get a place to stay for the night and get some food?" Makes sense, right? There were an estimated twenty thousand people there, all waiting to hear or see what Jesus said and did next. And what did He

do next? He said to His disciples, "You feed them." Did you catch that? The next right thing for the disciples was to feed the hungry. But how did they respond? "Um, Jesus, we only have like 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish... that might feed James and John, but it's not enough to feed all these people."

I'm sure Jesus was tempted at that moment to hang his head in disappointment. I wonder if He gave out a little sigh. Probably not. The next right thing for Jesus was to teach His disciples a very important lesson.

"Ok, give me the fish and bread and have all the people sit down on the grass." And He looked to His Father in Heaven and began to speak, "Father, thank you for providing these fish and the loaves of bread..."

Now maybe your next right thing isn't feeding five thousand, but it might be feeding five people who are hungry. Or it just might be doing a simple task in obedience to the Lord that illustrates to the world around you that you love Jesus, and you follow Him.

During His first visit to earth, Jesus gave a very small and simple instruction to two of His disciples... "Go to the village ahead of you and bring me a donkey and her colt." He didn't explain to them He needed this donkey to fulfill prophecy. He didn't explain He would ride the donkey into Jerusalem as the people shouted Hosanna. He didn't explain to them that a week later He would die on a cross, paying the price of our sin. He just said, "Go get them for me, and if anyone gives you any trouble, tell them, 'The Lord needs them.'"

Sometimes our need to understand what's next prevents us from partaking in the next right thing God has for us. But, even in exhaustion, or in discouragement, there is something satisfying in completing the next right thing. Who knows, the next right thing you do just might be something God has prepared in advance for you to do... a task for you to complete that prepares the way for the second coming of the King. ■

Life More Abundantly | by Kristen Alewine

Have you ever stopped to consider how many unexamined thoughts you have flying around in your head? I recently discovered one I have that's had a pretty negative impact on my trust in God. I have lived with the underlying assumption that the way God makes us holy, righteous, and like Him is solely by taking things away from us. The picture in my mind is of a person covered in layer upon layer and God removing those layers one by one until the person is tiny and down to a perfect, pure little human, void of all fun, relationships, color, and personality. What a terrible picture! I'm not sure where I came up with this.

I've lived with a bit of wariness toward God, assuming He wants

to take from me things that are fun, enjoyable, or just not serious enough. It's been hard for me to trust His heart at times, especially when it really does seem like He's taking something away from me. But recently, John 10:10 popped into my head: "I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." It seems pretty clear that God disagrees with my little picture! Are there times when He has to take things from us? Yes. Sometimes for reasons unknown, but sometimes once they're gone we can see how they were hurting us. Whether it's a job, a relationship, or just a twisted way of thinking about something, there are things that we don't know aren't good for us until they're gone. But

the beautiful thing I've begun to see about God recently is that He doesn't just take and leave a gaping hole, He replaces with something better, more life-giving. He created us and knows exactly what is needed to make us the fully formed image bearers that He planned for us to become. So we can hold things in our lives with an open hand, knowing that He's not just going to take them and abandon us. He will stay with us, walking step by step to create more life, abundant life, a life that will likely not resemble anything we would have created for ourselves. ■

Solution for caring

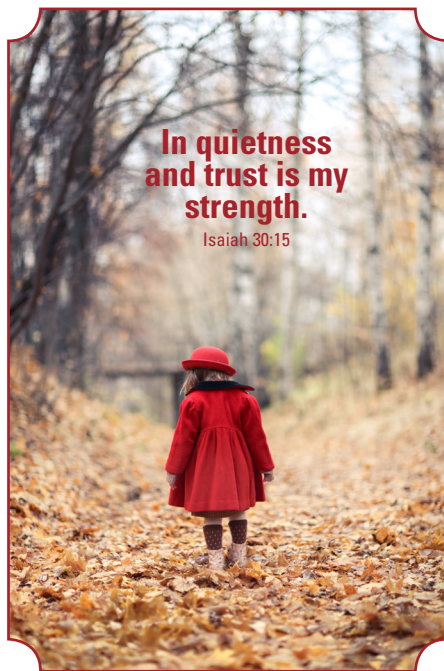
In Quietness and Trust | by Jessie Westlund

As a young teen, I often went to my mom's room when I wanted privacy to talk to a friend on the phone. I would lie on her big bed and talk, sometimes for a long period of time. There was a plaque on her wall that said, "...In quietness and confidence is your strength." (Living Bible) As a teen I lacked confidence and often felt inadequate to face some days. I pondered, "How can I have strength when I do not have confidence?" Recently in my Bible reading I came across this verse and to my amazement there was a lot more to this verse that gave me insight to the message on the plaque.

"For this is what the Lord God, the Holy One of Israel, has said: "In repentance and rest you will be saved, In quietness and trust is your strength. But you were not willing..." (Isaiah 30:15 NASB)

Understanding the context and original meaning of the text gave me more insight. This Scripture has been extremely meaningful to me over the last year. Many of my family and friends have experienced major crises over the last year. We have had some sick with COVID, advanced cancer,

others passed away, challenging work situations, and of course challenges we have all faced in dealing with the ever changing guidelines related to COVID. We find ourselves supporting



many people who are in need of help, prayer, encouragement, teaching from the Word and counsel. Some have asked, "Why does God not answer my

prayers?" Others ask, "What is going on in our nation and our world?" This verse has meant a lot to me because in many situations I have tried to handle things on my own or requested things I wanted done from God, but the key words are repentance, rest, in quietness, trust, and strength. However; the last sentence gives insight to human nature, "BUT you were not willing." I realized when I went on and read the whole passage, God was directing His people, but when the going got rough they relied on their own strength and wisdom, not turning to God and looking to Him for His message and solution for a situation. I confess sometimes God takes more time than I want and I am guilty of running ahead of Him to get a solution and I have been convicted to repent of self-sufficiency, and instead to rest and be quiet and trust. This is where I am learning I experience His strength and confidence.

There is a beautiful truth in verses 18-19 that gives great peace:

"Therefore the Lord longs to be gracious to you, and therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you. For the Lord is a God of justice; How blessed are all those who long for Him. O People... you will weep no longer. He will certainly be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you."

Wherever we are, He wants to be our God and the only one we turn to in our sorrow and crisis. It is here where we will learn to live in His compassion. Sometimes His ways are different than ours but if we cry out He will be compassionate to us and give us His best in the situations we face. His ways are always better than mine. As I have been learning to seek Him first, not my solutions and my ways, I have seen amazing changed lives and miracles. I have been learning, "In quietness and trust is my strength." ■

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righteousness (Christ Life), so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work? (II Timothy 3:16-17)

I invited Christ into my life as a young child. Though I was raised in the church, I drifted. I was nineteen when I rededicated my life to Christ. It was at that time I made a commitment concerning God's Word. If God said it, I believed it and that was enough for me. His Word is true, it is eternal, it stands firm in the heavens and is a lamp and light for my life.

As you think through these questions, consider praying for those around you, that they would also take time to really think about what they believe, and share with them your thoughts. When we know what we believe, it is our privilege to share it! "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." (2 Corinthians 5:18-20) ■

Solution for the future

When Lord? | by Daniel Westlund

In my 46 years of ministry, I have been asked many times “When is Christ coming?” In those 46 years I have taught and written about the signs we should be watching for as followers of Christ. As Jesus told us, “We are to watch and pray.” Jesus also said, “You must be ready, because the Son of Man (Jesus Christ) will come at an hour when you do not expect Him.” (Luke 12:40. NIV)

When He comes for His blood-bought children, who by faith have received Christ as their personal Savior, they will be taken up to heaven. However, there will be a great separation, “Two men will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding with a hand mill; one will be taken the other left. Two people will be in one bed; one taken the other left.” (Matthew 24:40-41, Luke 17:34) What a day of celebration, but yet a horrible day for those we know and love who are left behind.

Just preceding His coming, “Many will turn away from the faith and will

betray and hate each other, and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. Because of the increase in wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” (Matthew 24:10-14) All of these signs are happening right now. Why will there be a turning away? I fear as evil becomes more prominent and difficulties arise challenging our faith it will be easier to deny Christ than to stand firm. Certainly, the last 20 plus months we have seen evil escalate and some have become disillusioned in their faith journey. Many have prayed and answers do not seem to come quickly enough, causing some to question and even turn away from God.

We must be on our guard. Difficulty will test our faith and we must persevere and turn to Him for endurance so when He returns we will be found faithful to our wonderful Savior.

There is also an increasing amount of false and deceptive teaching taking place and out of this will come a form of godliness that denies the power of God, as well as people who are always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth.” (II Timothy 3: 5, 7) We will also see the rise of a one-world governing body and a leader that will control all commerce. (II Thessalonians 2:3-4, 9-10, Revelation 13:11-17)

Even now there is talk and written documents of the Great Re-Set to create a new world order with a one-world governing body controlling all aspects of life. It appears this has been put into motion through the worldwide pandemic. ■

Bulletin Board

- Dan is doing Bible studies for men. The studies are both in the evenings and over lunches. For those interested, contact us at sfl@solutionforlife.org. If you are interested in having these zoomed, we will work with groups or individuals.
- Jessie is developing a creative workshop for growing your personal relationship with Jesus. This will include creative journaling, personal worship, and prayer. This will be available in the first quarter of 2022 for those who are interested. We will take your reservations now to set up a date.
- Coaching for those who are having a difficult time pressing through the changes in our world.
- Workshops for women who would like to create a women’s ministry.
- All of these are available to any group or person who would like more information. Contact Jessie at sfl@solutionforlife.org.

Message from Dan and Jessie

We would love to hear from you on subjects and questions you’re interested in learning more about. Most recently, Dan has been doing a study on the Holy Spirit and out of that study came a request to have a better understanding of the difference between discernment and judging. Please let us know your request.

Thank you again for your support. Many of the donations have gone to supporting people with physical or spiritual needs.

Blessing to You,
Dan and Jessie