ONE OF MAN'S GREATEST NEEDS—FORGIVENESS
Text: Psalm 51:1-4; I John 1:9

Intro: The psalmist is very open and humble in his confessing his sin. His heart is torn up. He has lost some things with God that he misses and desires for the Lord God to restore them to him. All pride is set aside. It is only natural for the flesh to justify, cover up, hide, deny, and even blame others for personal sin. The psalmist wasn't doing any of this. This is the kind of admission and confession that brings about the forgiveness of God. God is a forgiving God. He can only and will only forgive those who humbly confess sin to Him.

I. THE PEOPLE AND FORGIVENESS
A. The guilty
   1. The psalmist sinned against God. He realizes this and confesses it.
   2. Paul teaches us that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Romans 3:23
   3. You have sinned against God. Lost sinners sin against God. The saved person sins against God. We are guilty of sin.

B. The grace
   1. God saves or redeems lost sinners. Redemption is the forgiveness of sin, Ephesians 1:7.
   2. God’s wonderful grace reaches out and seeks sinful man to forgive of sin.
   3. Repentance of sin is vital and necessary for sin to be forgiven. Only repenting of sin will satisfy God and man.

C. The gratitude
   1. Thank God for His forgiveness and cleansing. How awful and terrible it would be to go through life burdened down with sin.
   2. It is hard enough as it is. We try to handle the sin problem, but often times not God’s way.
   3. Thank God for a gracious, merciful, forgiving, loving God who delights in forgiving sinners of sin.

II. THE PLACES AND FORGIVENESS
A. The church
   1. The Word of God is taught in classes and preached from the pulpit.
   2. As the Word is presented, people will get under conviction about their sins, John 16:7-11.
   3. When you are under conviction, you can be forgiven and need to ask for the forgiveness of your sins.

B. The home
   1. We will have some times at home that we do some serious thinking about our relationship to God.
   2. Many people have got right with God at home. Maybe they are bothered at night just before they go to sleep.
   3. Maybe they see a television program or hear a sermon on the radio. They are bothered and they can get right with God.

C. The situations
   1. Life is getting more difficult to live. We will face situations that we have never faced before.
   2. We can act disobedient in the situations.
   3. We can thank God for our situations because they teach us that we need the Lord desperately.

III. THE PLAN AND FORGIVENESS
A. The conviction
   1. The Holy Spirit of God will convict us of our sins, John 16:7-11.
2. We know when we do wrong a lot of times. No one has to tell us. We grieve the Holy Spirit. We quench the Holy Spirit.
3. The Holy Spirit will convince us that we are wrong and need to be forgiven of our sins.

B. The confession
1. God is a tender loving forgiving God. He loves us so much that He will forgive us every time we sin, if we ask for forgiveness.
3. Confession involves repenting of our sins and turning from them to God and His will.

C. The cleansing
1. Sin causes a heavy load on the heart. Sin bows us down spiritually.
2. Our sins need to be forgiven and cleansed. God is willing to forgive us.
3. He will only cleanse us after we have been convicted and confess our sins, Eph. 1:7; I John 1:9.

IV. THE POWER AND FORGIVENESS
A. The person
1. The Lord has the power or right to forgive of sins, Matthew 9:1-5.
2. David asked God to forgive him of his sins in Psalm 51:1-5.
3. Jesus wanted the Jews to know that He is the one who can forgive of sin.

B. The power or authority
1. We can forgive each other of our sins committed against each other. Some of the hardest words and yet beautiful words are FORGIVE ME.
2. The Jews didn't believe Jesus was the Son of God and believed Him to blaspheme God.
3. We have a Saviour and Master who is able and willing to forgive us of our sins.

C. The plenty
1. He is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, I John 2:2.
2. He has forgiven me every time I have repented of sin and asked His forgiveness.
3. He is not like us. Someone does something to us 2 or 3 times and they can go their own way.
4. Jesus forgives us thousands of times and will thousands more times. He told Peter to forgive people 70 times 7. Peter thought 7 times was enough.

V. THE PEACE AND FORGIVENESS
A. The repentance
1. Sin will destroy our peace of mind and peace with God.
3. The only way that sin can be taken out of the way is to repent of our sins. Sin will be a heavy load until we are willing to ask for forgiveness.

B. The removal
1. When the Lord forgives our sins, He removes them as far as the East is from the West, Psalm 103:12.
2. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9.
3. We are living in a generation of people that are miserable and discontented because of the sin in their lives. Even saved people are not happy even though they have more than their parents did.

C. The rejoicing
1. David confessed sin and pled with God to restore the joy of His salvation, Psalm 51:12.
2. When nothing stands between you and God, you will rejoice and be glad and happy.
3. After we were saved, we were happy because our sins were forgiven.
4. As a saved person, when your sins are forgiven you will be happy.

WHY SHOULD WE PRAISE THE LORD?
Text: II Samuel 22:1-7

I. BECAUSE JESUS DELIVERS PEOPLE. V1,2
A. From Satan
1. In bondage to do his bidding
2. Sentenced to eternal condemnation.

B. From sinfulness, I Corinthians 10:13
1. Pre-saved habits and attitudes
2. Temptations to lay aside righteousness

C. From sinners
1. The ungodly seeking to abuse others
2. The saved who succumb to wicked influences.

II. BECAUSE JESUS DEFENDS HIS PEOPLE. V3,1; Eph. 6:10-13
A. Shielding them, Proverbs 30:5
1. Against spiritual attacks
2. Against their enemies' assaults

B. Protecting them, Psalm 59:16; 60:12
1. From the Devil and his demons
2. From dangers of every kind

C. Advocating for them, I John 2:1,2
1. Seeking mercy & patience from God.
2. Requesting God’s forgiveness of sin as repentance is made.

III. BECAUSE JESUS IS DEVOTED TO HIS PEOPLE, V5-7; Psalm 23:1-6
A. Attentive for their calls.
1. Listening for their cries of distress.
2. Never distracted or forgetful.

B. Considerate of their needs, Matthew 6:31-33.
1. Aware of what is needed.
2. Making provision for those needs to be met.

C. Responding to their requests, I John 5:14,15.
1. Making known His answer.
2. Giving as requested — within His will.

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and told me he had been saved that Sunday because of the witness of Jason. I hugged the young man and thanked him for telling me. To know Jason touched the young man's heart and because of it he had been saved, blessed our hearts and eased our pain some. In the days that followed, we received so many letters from the kids at college, how Jason had touched their hearts for God and how he always had a smile and a hug for everyone.

Then a few days later, Nicki, our granddaughter, was driving down Spencer Hwy. when a drunk man ran out in front of her. She had to brake to keep from hitting him. He ran against the curb, she started around him and he pulled across in front of her and she had to brake again. He hit a man in a new truck ahead of her. Nicki stopped, she was shaking and crying, the man asked her if she was hurt. She told him her cousin had just been killed in an accident the week before. The man asked her if he was the young man coming home from college, she said he was. The man told her he read about it in the paper and it scared him so, that he promised the Lord he would get back in church and had attended that Sunday. One more time God showed us good that came from Jason's death.

Then last Sunday night, Tom, Jason's older brother, for the first time in his life, sang a solo, one of Jason's songs, "The Hiding Place." Tom gave his testimony of how after the happenings of the past month, he had realized that we are not promised one moment more, and now is the time to start doing things for the Lord. I think most of the family has been brought closer to each other and to the Lord.

But there is one that Jason prayed for and had his friends at college pray for daily, that is his Dad who is a victim of alcohol. Please pray for Jason's dad that he will accept Jesus as his Savior and be delivered from the clutches of alcohol. This was Jason's greatest desire for his dad.

We have seen some good come from this terrible experience and we will look for more. For I know God knows best, even though we do not understand. And, yes, it is still hard to give up someone you were so proud of and loved so much.

One so young that used his talents for God and was so happy because he had decided that God wanted him to be a minister of music to young people. Yes, it is hard, and we still sometimes ask, Why? But we know in His wisdom, God knows why, and we have to trust Him. We must keep the good memories of our beloved Jason in the storehouse of our minds. We know one day we will hear him sing praises to God again. Until that time, we have to remember, "All things work together for good, to them that love the Lord."

Dovie Brown
Grandmother of Jason Hale

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**A TRIBUTE TO JASON**

We will never lose our beloved Jason. Even though, from this world he's gone. Within the hearts of those who love him, his precious memories linger on.

Peace comes from these cherished memories that with others we can share.
Bringing assurance, that his memories won’t die, 
The keepsakes of the heart will always be there.

Nothing that is loved is ever lost. 
Jason touched so many hearts with his songs. 
He will never really be gone away 
Because his witness in music lingers on.

Death can’t take away the wonderful way 
Our loved one touched our hearts. 
Our grief can’t take away the happiness 
He gave us from the very start.

After our grief and sorrow fades, 
Love and precious memories remain. 
I’ll remember him singing, “Watch the Lamb”, 
Until the day we meet again.

Grandson, I’m remembering death is a door 
All God’s children must go through. 
And the wonders on the other side of death 
Are peaceful, joyful, and all brand new.

And you will be waiting our coming home, 
Just the other side of that door. 
We will hear your voice sing again, 
and we will rejoice with you forever more. 

Dovie Brown

GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH MEMBERS-U
Text: Acts 9:6

Introduction:
A. The DISCERNMENT
1. Do you KNOW Christ?
2. The more you know Christ - the more you will LOVE Him.
3. The more you love Christ - the more you will want to SERVE Him.

B. The DETAILS
1. We serve Christ through serving others. Matthew 25:34-40.
2. The purpose of this study is to note Biblical principles which we can establish as goals or guidelines in helping us to achieve or advance in the development process.
3. Develop as Christians/Church members.
C. The DECLARATION - Good Church members are

I. UNIONIZERS!
A. The MEANING
1. The act or effort of bringing together.
2. The act or effort of unifying.

B. The MESSAGE - UNIONIZER in RELATIONSHIPS 
- We should be in the construction business - not the destruction business.
1. Relationship with God - Ministry of RECONCILIATION.
   a. Uniting people with God through presenting Jesus Christ to them.
   b. Remember - the Biblical Enlightenment which has been given to us. II Corinthians 5:18,19.
2. Relationships with others - Ministry of PEACE-MAKERS!
   a. Matthew 5:19
   b. Strive for the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
   c. Illus - How to handle situations when people are saying things which bring divisiveness and discord.
      1. We shouldn’t be talking like this.
      2. If you have a real problem with this person - you need to talk with them.

II. USABLE!
A. KNOWLEDGEABLE
1. Comprehension of the Word.
   a. Accumulation
   b. Application
2. Comprehension of certain areas of expertise.

B. DEPENDABLE
1. Committed to the CHRIST!
2. Committed to the CHURCH!
3. Committed to the CAUSE!

III. UPLIFTERS!
A. Uplifter of the PRE-EMINENT PERSON - Jesus Christ.
B. Uplifter of the PRINCIPLES which address all issues of life which are recorded in the Bible.
C. Uplifter of the PEOPLE.
   1. Individually
   2. Collectively - the Church.

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PRECIOUS PROMISES
Text: II Peter 1:1-4

Intro:
A. Of Abraham - "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, He was able also to perform."
B. Of Paul - "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us." II Cor. 1:20
C. Of Peter - "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." II Peter 3:9, 13.

I. THE PRECIOUS PROMISE OF HIS RETURN
A. The promise
   2. Testimony of the MEN IN WHITE, Acts 1:11.
B. The purpose of the return
   1. Receive His own!
   2. Receive works since we were saved!
   3. Reward for FAITHFULNESS and SERVICE RENDERED.
   4. Reveal His glory TO and IN us! II Thess. 1:7,10.
   5. Reunite!

II. THE PRECIOUS PROMISE OF BODILY RESURRECTION
A. John 11:25,26
B. John 11:41-44
C. I Corinthians 15:51,52
D. John 5:23,29
E. Put Revelation 1:18 and John 14:19 together and LOOK UP!

III. THE PRECIOUS PROMISE OF REUNION
A. Associate these passages:
   1. Prayer of Jesus to be with His own, John 17:24.
   2. II Corinthians 5:8.

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3. 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17.
B. David's faith: "But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me. II Samuel 12:23
C. Matthew 8:11.
D. Illustrated in the Mt. of transfiguration, Matthew 17:1-3.

IV. THE PRECIOUS PROMISE OF REWARD FOR FAITHFULNESS AND SERVICE!
A. Hebrews 6:10.
C. II Corinthians 5:10.

V. THE PRECIOUS PROMISE OF HIS REIGN ON EARTH!
A. Psalm 24:7-10
B. Luke 1:32,33
D. Matthew 28:29
E. Revelation 3:21
F. II Timothy 2:12
G. Revelation 11:15
H. Revelation 5:8,10
I. Revelation 20:4,6

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FRUITFUL CHRISTIANS - ATTITUDE FRUIT
Text: Galatians 5:22-26

Introduction: Fruit is extremely important. The Bible makes mention of fruit in 24 of 27 New Testament Books. The Bible describes fruit in two general categories (1) Attitude Fruit, and (2) Action fruit.
Attitude Fruit produces Action Fruit. Action Fruit without Attitude Fruit is Legalism and Hypocrisy. There is a difference between "works" and "Fruit". Works emphasize what a person does, Fruit emphasize what a person is. Read John 15:1-8 and Matthew 7:16-20.

I. THE BACKGROUND
A. The word "fruit" is singular, not plural.
B. The Spirit produces "one fruit" with nine facets or qualities.
C. These qualities are seen in our life as we learn to "walk in the Spirit". v 25
D. We walk in the Spirit by crucifying the flesh. v 24

II. THE BATTLEGROUND 5:19-21
A. Sexual Sins - v 19
   1. Adultery - Gk. moicheia - Premarital or extramarital intercourse.
   2. Fornication - Gk. porneia - General word for any sexual sin. Includes unfaithfulness to mate. The word from which we get our word pornography.
   3. Uncleanness - Moral Impurity. Lit. refers to a filthy mind that produces sensual and suggestive thoughts. Reads illicit sex even into the most wholesome situations. Marked by perverted fantasies as expressed in pornographic literature and movies.
   4. Lasciviousness - Moral wantonness that even offends public decency. Refers to the Gay Lifestyle.

B. Religious Sins - v 20a
   1. Idolatry - Worship of anything other than the true God.
   2. Witchcraft - Gk. pharmakeia - We get our word pharmacy from this word. It refers to the habitual use of drugs. Also includes astrology and Satanism.

C. Attitude Sins - v 20b-21a
   3. Emulation's - Gk. zeloi - Selfish jealousy over objects with sinful attitude. "Keep Up With Everyone Else Or I will Pitch a Fit Attitude."
   5. Strife - Gk. eritheiai - A Click, the "in crowd" mentality. The "us and them" attitude. The Opposite of Unity.
   6. Seditions - Gk. dichostasias - To incite rebellion against authority by conduct or language.
   7. Heresies - Unbiblical Beliefs.
   8. Envyings - Gk. phonoi - Feeling of ill will caused by wrongly desiring to have what belongs to someone else.

D. Social Sins - v 21b

2. Drunkenness - Includes both private and public intoxication.
3. Reveling - Drunken parties, engaging in loose and boisterous behavior, a wild party, a carnival spirit (Mardi Gras), or in short, "a dance."

Conclusion: They who "continually do such things" shall not see the kingdom of God. v 21c. This is not a Christian who has lost salvation, but a lost person who has never been saved. Only a lost person can allow these things to dominate their lifestyle.

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THE LOVE OF CHRIST
Text: Romans 5:6-8

Introduction: The most often missing element in the lives of children of God is LOVE for one another. Jesus spoke more about love than anything else. He left a command that we LOVE one another (John 13:34). Love is to be the distinguishing characteristic for children of God. Love covers a multitude of sins (I Peter 4:8). Jesus set the pattern of Love for us in His SPEECH, His LIFE and His DEATH. What change it would make in most of our lives, if we could only realize the depth of the Love of Christ for us.

I. LOVE WAS DEMONSTRATED IN HIS LIFE.
   A. Concerning spiritual needs, Matthew 9:36.
   B. Concerning Sinners, John 8:6-7.
   C. Concerning Sickness, Matthew 14:14.
   D. Concerning slumbering disciples, Matthew 26:40-41.

II. HIS LOVE WAS DEMONSTRATED IN HIS EXAMPLE.
   B. Toward a grieving friend, John 11:33-36.
   C. Toward a wicked city, Matthew 23:37.

III. HIS LOVE WAS DEMONSTRATED IN HIS DEATH.
   A. In his silence, John 19:9-10.
   B. In his suffering, I Peter 2:21-23.
   C. In his submission, John 10:17-18.
   D. In his statement, Luke 23:34.

IV. HIS LOVE WAS DEMONSTRATED IN HIS PROMISES.
   A. His promise of peace, John 14:27.
   B. His promise of strength, John 15:5.
   C. His promise of comfort, Matthew 11:28-30.
   D. His promise of his return, John 14:1-3.

V. SUMMARY:
   A. The love of Christ is demonstrated in:
      1. His life - His attitudes.
      2. His example toward others - His actions.
      3. His death - His actions toward His enemies.
      4. His promises - His concern for His disciples throughout the ages.

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THE COSTS AND REWARDS OF A REVIVAL

Text: II Chronicles 7:14

Introduction: Revival is not just a meeting but a condition of the soul. No meetings can revive a church, but God can. Most churches need revival, but very few are willing to pay the cost. Just about everything costs something. THERE ARE SOME SACRIFICES WE NEED TO MAKE IF WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A REVIVAL.

I. COSTS

A. Recognize a need (humble)
1. A lot of us are too proud to realize how far we are away from God.
2. We need to humble ourselves and not worry about our neighbor. Revival is going to start with you.
3. Isaiah 57:15 - one who will humble and realize they sin and need God, the Lord will revive.

B. Sacrifice some time (pray)
1. The most needed of all Christian activities is prayer.
2. PRAYERLESSNESS results in CARELESSNESS, POWERLESSNESS, and USELESSNESS.
3. You will lose all this is you fail to pray.
4. James 5:16

C. Devote your life to the Lord (seek)
1. There is nothing at all wrong with rededication, but it would be great if there was no more rededications because everyone was dedicated.
2. I Chronicles 16:11 - If we are going to stay dedicated, we need God’s strength. We can’t face the devil alone.

D. Repent and Depend on Jesus (turn)
1. Repentance for the saved person is vital if they want to restore fellowship. I HAVE SINNED.
2. II John 1:7-10.

II. REWARDS

A. Reconciliation is needed (God will heal)
1. Remember this is a promise God made to Solomon and it still holds true today.

B. Forgiveness brings peace
1. If you are not as close to the Lord as you ever have been, then maybe you need to get things right.
2. Pharisees and Publican—“Lord have mercy on me a sinner”—this man was justified.

C. Blessings are in Store
1. God promises blessing for those who are obedient, James 1:25. God wants us to have a revival

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WHAT SIN DOES TO MAN AND GOD:

If there is one thing I could make you serious about -

(SIN)

Text: Ezekiel 18:4

Introduction: Ezekiel was discussing the individual effect of sin and the responsibility of every individual to keep from... ...

A. Sin in one’s life does have a lasting effect if we do not repent.
B. What is the effect of sin in man’s life.

I. SIN DULLS THE HEARING.

A. The hearing of God, Isaiah 59:1,2. The Lord’s
Conclusion: All of us have sin in our lives, but Christ died to forgive sin.
A. There is no reason for you to let sin dull, darken, decay and destroy you.
B. You can be forgiven by calling out to Jesus in repentance.

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THE SONG OF THE BROKENHEARTED FATHER
Text: Psalm 51:12

Introduction: The word "joy" has a distinctive place in our Christian vocabulary. We talk about the Joy of the Lord - Sing "There is JOY, JOY, JOY, down in my heart. From a prison cell, Paul told the Philippians to "rejoice!" This text is a prayer of David's heart unto God for forgiveness. In II Samuel 11 & 12 we have the sad story of David's sin - He was guilty of adultery, deception and murder. The Lord forgave him, but there was a price to be paid - the child born to Bathsheba died. JOY & SIN DO NOT DWELL TOGETHER. When sin came into David's heart, his song was gone - fellowship with God was broken - He stopped praying & singing. But now I want us to see the song of the brokenhearted father.

I. THE JOY THAT DAVID HAD
A. David's joy came from a personal knowledge of his God.
1. He could say, The LORD is my shepherd and in thee, O Lord do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed, Psalm 31:1.
2. David knew God and it brought joy to his heart - just as it will any man who comes to Christ for salvation.
B. David's joy came from his personal experiences with God.
1. God answered David's prayers - gave him protection and gave his victories.
2. Remember the great victory over Goliath? And never forget, David knew it came from the Lord. He gives us VICTORY.
C. David's joy came from helping others to follow God.
1. There is a peculiar, undescrivable joy given to us when we help those around us - joy in strengthening our fellow man.
2. David was often the comforter & helper of those in need.
3. He was a man of courage - as a soldier he was stalwart and fearless - His faith was fixed in God.

II. THE JOY THAT DAVID LOST. (I want to repeat something - sin and joy do not go together)
A. David lost the joy of fellowship with God.
1. David was still God's child but fellowship was broken & David knew it.
2. Nothing as miserable as being out of fellowship with God.
3. You can't pray, can't sing - can't be a blessing to yourself nor your family -
miserable - full of woe!
B. He lost the joy of service.
1. We cannot serve God when sin is ruling in our hearts.
2. We can try - go through the motions - but we fail every time - we know it - the people know it - family knows it.
3. There just isn't any joy in service when sin enters.
C. David lost the joy of inner peace of walking with God.
1. Do not take this lightly - We have the misery of emptiness and we have the chastening hand of God upon us, Hebrews 12:6.
2. Go talk with the apostle Peter - (give story of his denial)
3. When the rooster crowed - Peter went out and wept bitterly!
4. If your heart has an emptiness and unhappiness - it must be you have lost the joy of your salvation - some sin has been permitted to enter - and now is the moment to straighten out your life.

III. THE JOY THAT DAVID REGAINED, PSALM 51:12
Note: The joy was restored to King David - David got right - David confessed his sin - God forgave him and restored his joy! What did David learn from this experience?
A. He learned the joy of sins forgiven.
1. I John 1:9 tells us, "If we confess our sins ..."
2. See your sin as it is in the sight of God and confess it and plead for cleansing upon the basis of Christ's blood.
B. He learned the joy of effective prayer.
1. Sin stops prayer, Psalm 66:18 - "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me."
2. Get on your knees and pray - cleanse your heart by opening it up to God.
3. Illustration: Mountain climbers came to a very treacherous part of their climb - gust of wind came - experienced guide shouted out to them - "Get on your knees! You are only safe when you are down on your knees!"
C. David learned the joy of service!
1. When our sins are forgiven - we can pray - then it is time to get busy - "Then will I teach transgressors thy ways".
2. We are saved to serve - we must not be negligent of the great task of doing the work committed unto us.

Conclusion: THIS BROKENHEARTED FATHER WAS MADE TO REJOICE AGAIN.
1. If you have been saved and gotten away from God - this is the time to come back unto Him - time to claim I John 1:9 and get your heart right with God.
2. If you have never been saved, then this is the time to repent of your sins and to believe in Jesus Christ.
a. Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.
b. Will you receive Him as your Saviour?
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FIGURES CONCERNING THE BIBLE
Text: Psalm 119:1-5,112

Introduction:
A. Precious to every believer should be the Bible.
1. It is our rule of faith and practice.
2. Without its instructions we have no idea of what God expects from us.
3. It speaks of God's plan for man.
B. The Bible has much to say about the Bible.
1. It is the Word of God.
2. It is truth.
3. It is inspired.
C. The Bible employs figures of speech concerning the Bible.
1. This helps us better understand the power, purpose, and effects of the Word.
2. No way can we notice all of the Figures used concerning the Bible, but we will notice many of them.

I. THE WORD IS A LAMP. Psalm 119:105, 130
A. The Need for a lamp
1. Danger exists in walking in the dark.
a. Just recently a woman fell off a cliff while groping in the dark.
b. We may know the path well, yet snakes or other predators may be in the path.
2. We can walk with a sure foot and without danger if we have a light.
B. The Identification of the lamp
1. The Word of God is the lamp.
2. It gives us the necessary light to live godly lives.
3. The Word enlightens us concerning the program and plan of God.
C. The Results of the lamp
1. It gives understanding to the simple.
2. UNDERSTANDING to discern mentally, perceive.
3. SIMPLE foolish, easily enticed and seduced, credulous.

II. THE WORD IS A MIRROR. James 1:23-25
A. The Need
1. Humanity needs a proper view of self.
2. Just as looking into a mirror reveals the true condition of the physical man, so looking into the Word of God reveals the true condition of the Spirit man.
3. The Word shows us our proper condition.
B. The Application
1. Looking into the Word is not sufficient.
2. There must be application.
3. Knowledge without application leads to arrogance.

C. The Deception
   1. To look into the Word and not apply is to deceive one’s self.
   2. It is self-deception.

III. THE WORD IS A LAVER. Ephesians 5:26
   A. The Use of the Laver
      1. A laver is a basin or container for water.
      2. It was used for cleaning purposes.
      3. The Priests washed their hands for purification purposes while officiating at the altar of the Tabernacle or Temple.
   B. The Word is the laver.
      1. In the same way, the Bible is the container for the cleansing of the Christian.
      2. The context shows that salvation is not being discussed, but rather to the doctrinal cleansing of the Child of God.
      3. Like the water, the Word will do us no good unless it is applied to our lives.

   A. It is Milk for Babies.
      1. The youngest Christian can find nourishment in the Word of God.
      2. A baby must have food that its system can assimilate.
      3. So it is with the Christian.
      4. Paul fed the Corinthians the milk of the Word. “I have fed you with milk and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.”
      5. We should not stay on milk all of our lives.
   B. It is Bread for the Hungry. Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4; Luke 4:4
      1. As bread is the staff of physical life, so God’s Word is a necessity for Spiritual life and growth.
      2. The Word is just as important to the Spiritual man as food is to the physical man.
   C. It is Strong Meat for Strong Men.
   D. It is Honey.
      1. Honey was the only means of sweetening that was had in the days of the Old Testament.
      2. It was scarce and considered a luxury.
      3. David likens the Words, Law, Statutes, and Judgments of God to Honey. “More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.” Psalm 19:10
      4. The Word of God is delightful and beneficial to the Believer.

V. THE WORD IS TO BE DESIRED MORE THAN FINE GOLD. Psalm 19:10.
   A. The Bible is Valuable to the Believer.
      1. Most Christians have very little in this life.
      2. However, we all have access to a veritable gold mine in the Word of God.
   B. The Bible is Valuable DURING TRIALS OF LIFE.
      1. David, facing many difficulties, said; “The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.” Psalm 119:72.
      2. The Word helps us, guides us, strengthens us during these tough times.

VI. THE WORD IS A SWORD. Ephesians 6:17.
   A. The Need for a Sword
      1. The context
      2. We are in a battle, literally.
      3. We need the proper instruments of warfare.
      4. We have the armour for defense, Paul enumerates them.
      5. We need the offensive weapon, the Word of God.
      1. “Quick” alive, living
      2. “Powerful” energetic, active, productive
      3. “Piercing” to pass through, to penetrate
      4. “Soul and spirit, joints and marrow” The expressions serve to convey effectively the notion of the extreme power of penetration of the Word of God, to the very core of man’s being.
      5. “Discerner” able to judge
      6. “Thoughts and intents” refers to the action of reason.

   A. Not everyone receives the Seed the same way.
      1. Some let the Devil steal the Seed away. This is done by his snares, deceive, etc.
      2. Some gladly receive the Seed. Yet, they don’t last long.
      3. Others make excuses, “They don’t have time.” Riches and pleasures of this world.
      4. While others receive the Seed with gladness. They live by the Word.
   B. We are to Sow the Seed.
      2. When? “In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand.” Eccl. 11:6.
         a. Sow the Seed with sincerity and sorrow.
         b. Because of the condition of men.
   C. We are Born of Incorruptible Seed. “Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God...”.

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Praise The Lord!
Church Leaders Must Be
Text: Acts 6:2-4
by Charles Swilling

I. Church Leaders Must be Consecrated.
   A. Consecrated to the Lord.
   B. Consecrated to a church
   C. Consecrated to the Lord’s Word.
II. Church Leaders Must be Calm.
    A. Calm during troubles.
    B. Calm during disappointment or discouragement.
    C. Calm when criticized.
III. Church Leaders Must be Contributors.
    A. Contribute time.
    B. Contribute talents.
    C. Contribute tithe.
IV. Church Leaders Must be Clean.
    A. Clean in Language.
    B. Clean in Longings.
    C. Clean in Living.
V. Church Leaders Must be Co-operative.
    A. Co-operate with people.
    B. Co-operate with plans.
    C. Co-operate with programs.

ABIDING IN CHRIST
Text: John 15:1-10

Introduction:
A. God has always expected His people to produce fruit.
   1. Old Testament...Israel...Isaiah 5:1-2.
      a. What God did: "a very fruitful hill," "fenced it," "gathered out the stones," "planted it with the choicest vine," "built a tower in the midst," "made a winepress therein," etc...
      b. What God expected... "that it should bring forth grapes."
      c. What were the results... "brought forth wild sour grapes."
   2. New Testament...us...text.
B. Bearing fruit is included in the Spiritual life.
   1. The Spiritual life should not be measured by what evil it does not practice.
   2. Bearing fruit is also involved.
   3. Fruit is what God looks for.
C. The meaning of "abide".
   1. It means to dwell at one’s own house, to maintain unbroken fellowship.
   2. It has the idea of permanence of position, occupying a place as one’s dwelling place, maintaining unbroken communion and fellowship.
   3. In this text, it refers to unbroken fellowship with Christ.
   4. If we have unbroken fellowship with Christ, we bear fruit.
I. THE ANALOGY....v 1-3
   A. The true Vine...v 1a

1. “I Am”
2. Jesus used this form of expression often.
3. "I Am" is emphatic (excludes all others).
4. "True vine" the genuine vine, all that the true vine should be.
B. The Husbandman...v 1b
   1. "my Father is the husbandman".
   2. He is the vinedresser, gardener, cultivator.
   3. Both owner and caretaker.
   4. The husbandman tends it, waters it, protects it, cultivates it.
C. The Branches...v 2-3
   1. The branches are believers.
   2. The position of the branches: "In Me."
      a. a position that cannot be severed.
      b. a position of responsibility and importance.
   3. The fruitless branches: "that beareth not fruit he taketh away..."
      a. There are suckers that grow out from the plant but add nothing to its usefulness.
      b. It must be cut away.
   4. The fruitful branches: "he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit..."
      a. "purgeth" cleanses, prunes,
      b. The reason: "in order that it may bring forth more fruit...continually..."
   5. The results of pruning...v 3.
      a. "you are cleansed and pruned already because of the Word."
      b. We can produce more fruit because of the Word.
II. THE ABIDING...v 4-6
   A. The Necessity of Abiding...v 4
      1. "abide" to remain (pres. imp.) "continually be abiding"
   2. The only way to bear fruit is for the branch to be connected to the vine.
   3. When the branch is severed...no fruit unless it shares the life of the vine.
   4. When we cease to depend upon Christ and have communion with Christ, we cease to produce.
B. The Benefits of Abiding...v 5
   2. There is nothing for a broken off branch to do but wither and die.
   3. "much fruit" abundant fruit.
C. The Results of Abiding...v 6
   1. "If" maybe so, maybe not,
   2. We don't lose our salvation.
   3. He is thrown out as a broken off branch and withers.
   4. The pruning refers to judgement upon the fruitless...I Corinthians 3:16.
III. THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS....v 7-8
   A. Concerning Prayer...v 7
      1. Notice to whom the promise is made.
      2. What kind of things will this man ask for?
      3. Whatever he asks for will be in Christ’s will.
B. Concerning Glory...v 8
   1. The Father is honored.
   2. This is how my father will be glorified.
   3. "So shall ye be my disciple"
      a. And so prove to be my disciples.
      b. And show yourselves to be disciples of mine.

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THE PREDICAMENT OF PILATE

Introduction:
1. Here was a man who was torn between the conviction of his heart and the cry of the multitude.
2. His heart said, "He is innocent." The crowd said, "Crucify Him!"

I. HIS CRUCIAL PRIVILEGE- "They led him unto Pilate" vs 1
   A. A face to face encounter with Jesus will have a lasting effect on anyone.
      1. Some will harden their hearts and reject Him.
      2. Some will see Him as Saviour and receive Him.
   B. One day all will stand before Him face to face and give an account - Revelation 20:11-15.

II. HIS COMPELLING QUESTION - "Art thou the king of the Jews?" vs 3
   A. Jesus answered, "Thou saiest it."
      1. Matthew 16:13-16 - The son of God
      2. John 18:36 - A heavenly king
   B. The first coming of Christ was to provide salvation but His second coming will provide a King.
      1. He will rule from David's throne.
      2. He will rule with a rod of iron

III. HIS CANDID CONFESSION "I find no fault in this man" vs 4
   A. Any honest man will have to give the same answer.
      1. 1 Peter 2:22 - no sin.
   B. If Jesus was a sinner then he could not be a saviour.
      1. He would have been a spotted lamb.
      2. He would have died a sinner's death for himself.

IV. HIS COWARDLY EVASION - "He sent him to Herod" vs 5-12
   A. People today are still trying to evade a decision about Jesus by sending Him away.
      1. From their minds.
      2. From their presence.
   B. If Jesus thought He was divine and wasn't then He was a maniac. If He pretended to be the saviour and was not then He was a fraud. But if He is who He said that He was then we should receive Him without hesitation.
      1. Investigate the facts.
      2. Investigate His character.
      3. Don't take someone else's word.

V. HIS CONCILIATORY PROPOSAL - "I will therefore chastise him, and release him" vs 15
   A. Pilate thought chastisement would appease the people.
      1. His own conscience told him to release Jesus.
   B. Many today are still trying to plan a way to avoid a decision.
      1. Some substitute religion and good works.
      2. Some engross themselves in the things of the world.
   C. The question still remains "what will ye do with Jesus?"

VI. HIS CONDEMNING DECISION - "and Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required." vs 24
   A. They required crucifixion for Jesus.
      1. Crucifixion was reserved for the vilest offenders.
      2. It was a curse for a man to die on a cross.
   B. He died on that cross which really belonged to another.
      1. Isaiah 53:5 - "for our transgressions".
      2. Galatians 2:20 - "gave himself for me".
      3. 1 Peter 3:18 - "the just for the unjust".

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