ON THE HOME FRONT

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The joys of moral living are rich in their rewards for every soul that practices them! The Bible gives us the principles and rules by which to live morally upright lives with the promise that we will be blessed in them (Jas. 1:27). Many have not tried them and failed; they have not tried living a Christian life at all! Every farmer knows that one cannot reap great benefits when he does not sow any great amount of seed (Gal. 6:7-8)! At the Getwell congregation, we encourage people to read and study their Bible so that they may know how to please God and meet Him in peace at the last day of life (II Tim. 2:15).

We can live a successful life by following our Lord’s teaching. He has been given all authority in Heaven and on earth (Matt. 28:18-20). His authority is either absolute in our lives, or it is obsolete! If we do not “live unto Christ,” we cannot hope for Heaven as our eternal abode. Inspired Paul says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him” (Col. 3:16-17). He wrote to the young preacher Timothy, “But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (I Tim. 6:6-10). And he commands Timothy, and us, “… keep thyself pure” (I Tim. 5:22).
Paul to the Corinthians writes, “Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband” (I Cor. 7:2). Again, the same apostle of Christ says to Roman Christians that there are those in the world who “are filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness” (Rom. 1:29). These things should never be named among Christians or anyone else! Incest is now and has always been a sin. Incest is “the crime of cohabitation between persons related within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law (Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary, page 420). Since God created man and woman, His will has been that there be one man for one woman for life in marriage (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:18-25; Matt. 5:32; 19:1-9; I Cor. 7:10-11; Rom. 7:1-3). Marriage is the only arrangement made by God by which the gratifications of cohabitation are lawful (I Cor. 7:2). The term “incest” is spoken of in the Bible, and is included in the term “fornication” (Rom. 1:29-31; I Cor. 6:9-10; II Cor. 12:20-21; Eph. 5:3-5; Gal. 5:19-21; Col. 3:5-9; I Tim. 1:9-10). The analytical Lexicon shows the Greek word “porneia” includes “fornication, whoredom, concubinage, adultery, incest, lewdness, and uncleanness.” All of these are evil practices condemned in the Bible. Our world needs desperately to learn the following:

1. To practice self-control, keeping ourselves pure, and within the confines of God’s marriage law (I Tim. 5:22; Matt. 19:9; I Cor. 9:27).
2. That evil toward a child or other relatives will be remembered, and in later life will bring heavy cost for our sin (Num. 32:23; Matt. 18:5-7).
3. Scars left in the lives of others by our sin will cause difficulty with a normal life in later years.
4. That if no one ever “tells,” God still sees, knows, and will reward our sin accordingly (Rom. 6:23).

Members of the church of Christ, saved by the grace of God, stand for purity in life. They have been cleansed from sin by faith, repentance, confession of the name of Christ, and being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). When we as Christians fall back into sin (II Pet. 2:20-22; Gal. 6:1), we have an advocate with the Father in Heaven through our Lord Jesus Christ (Heb. 7:25; Acts 8:22; I Jn. 1:7-9). Listen closely to Paul as he writes to the young preacher Titus: “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and world lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ” (Tit. 2:11-13). Flee incest!
Leaning on God is not something that comes naturally in this world we live in. I like things to be perfectly in my control; I’m a planner, and I would rather have things fall perfectly in place.

But, the thing is, things don’t always fall into place.

Sometimes a family member gets a diagnosis that we don’t want. Sometimes, we lose our jobs. Sometimes, our school situations change. Sometimes, our plans fall through in general. But here’s the thing: this is where leaning on God is of paramount importance. We shouldn’t be so wrapped up in what negative things are going on that we forget to lean on the God who loves us more than we can imagine.

So, what does it really mean to lean on Him?

**It means that we keep scripture in our hearts.**

I love the passage from Psalm 119: “I have stored up Your Word in my heart, that I might not sin against You” (Psalm 119:11 ESV). I love this passage because it emphasizes the psalmist’s desire to keep God’s Word close to his chest, so to speak.

“But wait,” you might be asking me, “How could he have had Scripture yet?” The Bible wasn’t complete in the Old Testament? You’re right. It wasn’t. But they still had records of what God did for them in Moses’ days, so they knew what God’s commands were, and they wanted to keep those commandments in mind at all times. The Psalmist declares this intent to the Lord here, and so should we in our own hearts. We can do so by turning to His Word and reading scripture that instructs, counsels, and comforts us.

**Cast your cares on Him.**

I also love this passage: “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because he cares for you” (1 Peter 5:6-8 ESV).

This passage has definitely helped me in times when I’ve felt totally out of control, whatever the situation, no matter how significant. And I recommend this passage to friends who are feeling a similar way. God wants us to cast our cares on Him; from the beginning, He has wanted to help us in this fallen world, from the time Adam and Eve were given skins to wear after their fall (Genesis 3:21) to the crucifixion of His Son.

All in all, He is there for us, and we can lean on Him anytime.

**Finally, trust, even when it’s hard.**

This goes back to casting cares, but there’s a reason why Solomon emphasizes trust in Proverbs 3:5-6: “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths” (ESV).

Trust is another thing that doesn’t come naturally to many. We worry so much about our own safety and our own preferences that sometimes it’s hard to exit our little happy bubbles and step out of our comfort zones to try something new or face our fears. I know I’ve definitely felt that way before about many things in my life, whether it’s been related to me or any worries I’ve had about loved ones. But I can rest assured that God has everyone in His hands, and that all things work together for good for those who love Him (Romans 8:28).

In my experience, this is what it means to lean on God: leaning on His Word, entrusting my cares to Him, and trusting Him no matter what. In this fallen world, we need all the hope we can get. I could not be more thankful to have His grace, mercy, and strength to carry me through good times and bad. I pray the same for you, dear reader.

—THINK

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