

# Good News

*From Getwell*

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#### SCHEDULE OF WEEKLY ACTIVITY

##### SUNDAY

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.

Worship.....10:20 a.m.

Worship.....5:00 p.m.

##### WEDNESDAY

Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

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## ON THE HOME FRONT

Our heritage is an important part of who we are and if we have a good heritage, it is our responsibility to carry on the heritage entrusted to us. As members of the Lord's church, we have the responsibility to maintain its purity, doctrine and growth as the bride of Christ. We have the heritage given to us by our country's founding fathers and those who have laid down their lives in the service of our country. Lastly but closer to our hearts we have family heritage. Our parents and our ancestors have given us a good name to carry on.

The above paragraph leads me to my own family. Recently my Aunt Sarah Curtis passed to her reward, she was a faithful Christian all her life. But her Christian life is tied directly to her mother, my grandmother, Ruth Naomi Wallace, who was a faithful Christian unto her death, She and her husband, S.R. Wallace raised five children on a forty-acre farm in eastern Arkansas. My grandfather who I loved and respected was not a Christian, so he gave very little encouragement in spiritual matters. The family lived five miles from town where the church met. They were 1 ¼ miles for the main road. Every Lord's day as weather permitted, she would dress the kids in their Sunday best and with the kids in tow walk the 1 ¼ miles to the WPA main road where they could catch a ride to town. When arriving at the church building, she would wipe them off and tidy them up. This was her weekly routine every Lord's day. She canned most of the food they consumed, used the left-over vegetables for making soup. My dad said he once counted 500 jars of goods she had canned. Occasionally there would be a neighbor in the area in need of food, my grandmother saw that they did not go hungry. My grandmother planted the garden, tilled the garden, harvested the garden, used the fruits of the garden. She was motivated by love for her family and her love for God. When she died, the preacher Brother Shattipe made the statement "if Mrs. Wallace cannot get to Heaven, then none of us will." That is and was our family heritage for my aunt and for me.

Until next week!

Ron Wallace

# RON'S REMINDERS



## Victory Where There Was Once Defeat

As one year closes and another opens, it is good to pause and take spiritual inventory. Paul wrote, "Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves" (2 Corinthians 13:5).

Think back to the Bible story of Joshua. Under that great commander, God's army suffered only one defeat in conquering all of Canaan.

That defeat was in a small place called Ai. It was not a stronghold, but Israel self-destructed because they had sin in the camp. Achan's covetousness caused about thirty-six good men to die (Joshua 7:1-26).

God would not fight for Israel until they corrected the problem. The offender was stoned, and they went back to the battlefield. As the soldiers waited in the hills for the signal to attack, they must have wondered, "Can there be victory where there was once defeat?"

The answer was yes—the second battle was won in decisive fashion. Remembering four things can bring us a victory at our "Ai."

### YESTERDAY'S LOSS DOESN'T DOOM TODAY

Christianity has suffered its apparent losses. Jesus was killed; the apostles were beaten; the church was scattered. But God always won in the end. Jesus was resurrected (Mark 16:6); the apostles took the gospel to the world (Colossians 1:23); the church multiplied in number (Acts 9:31).

Christians have setbacks, too. You may have made mistakes, gone back to a bad habit, disappointed your family, failed at your job, or even backslidden.

We all make mistakes. A church bulletin reported that "everyone enjoyed the singing." (I hope the letter left out was a g and not an n!) Around the first of the year, a sign advertising a local barber shop seemed to have lost a Y; it read, "Happy Ear." (Hopefully the barber had not made a serious error!) Most of us can relate to these words:

I wish that there was some wonderful place  
Called the Land of Beginning-Again  
Where all our mistakes and all our heartaches  
And all our poor selfish grief Might be dropped,  
like a shabby old coat, at the door,  
And never put on again.<sup>1</sup>

There is such a place. That place is here. There is such a time. That time is now (2 Corinthians 6:2). Victory can follow defeat.

We all need to start over at times. Remember the throne set in heaven and the voice which cries, "Behold, I make all things new" (Revelation 21:5)? The Bible speaks of the new covenant. The old covenant was a sentence of death (Galatians 3:10), so Christ gave a new one (Matthew 26:28). Under it, He forgets sins (Hebrews 8:12).

Life can be made over again (Galatians 6:15; Philippians 1:6). Jesus is the "Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End" (Revelation 1:8). The Bible speaks of a new way (Hebrews 10:19-20) that leads to a new Jerusalem (Revelation 3:12). The Bible speaks of the new man. Share in Paul's optimism: "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17).

### DON'T STUMBLE OVER THE SAME STONE TWICE

Joshua and Israel made sure that they had corrected the "Achan problem" before they returned to Ai. All make mistakes, but it is foolish to keep making the same mistakes. The Greeks used to say that stumbling is a human flaw, but it is disgraceful to stumble against the same stone twice.

David Lusk tells the story of two hunters who flew deep into remote Canada in search of elk. When they started home, their pilot saw their four elk and told them the plane could only carry two.

They protested, "The plane last year was exactly like this one and we had six elk then." The pilot reluctantly agreed to try. They took off. Unfortunately, the plane did not have sufficient power to climb out of the valley, so they crashed.

As they stumbled from the wreckage, one hunter asked the other if he knew where they were. "I'm not sure," he said, "but I think we are about two miles from where we crashed last year."

We should learn from last year's mistakes and not make them this year's mistakes. We should put away childish things (1 Corinthians 13:11) and remove the ensnaring sin (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Crashing in the same forest is inexcusable. We may need to get a new set of friends (1 Corinthians 15:33), or put good influences in the place of old habits (1 Peter 2:11). Are we willing to change our lives for the good of our souls? Or will we go on sinning and crashing and burning every year? For most, it is not a new road we need but a new determination to travel the right way before us.

#### CHAMPIONS GET UP ONE MORE TIME THAN THEY FALL (JOSHUA 8:19-21)

Championship seasons are rarely undefeated seasons. The NFL has had one team with an undefeated season. The NBA and MLB have had none. Tiger Woods is considered by many as the greatest golfer of all time; he does not always win.

Every Christian makes mistakes. Peter made some serious blunders (cf. Luke 22:45-61), but he bounced back (cf. Acts 2). So can we. If you have forsaken the Lord, do not give up. You can return and live the Christian life. If you have lost your fervor for Christ, you can find it again. If the devil has led you down sin's road, you can return—as the prodigal did (Luke 15). If you are defeated and despondent, remember Ai shows there can be victory where there was once defeat.

There can be victory in breaking bad habits. Many Christians have finally conquered smoking, bad language, procrastination, gossip, and alcohol addiction by saying, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13; cf. 2 Corinthians 3:4-5). Jesus promised, "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5).

There also can be victory where there was defeat in soul winning. Keep inviting family members or friends to church services. The next invitation may be the one he accepts. The next sermon may be the one that reaches her. The next Bible study may convert him. Their souls are too valuable to give up (Matthew 16:26). Love keeps on keeping on. Persistence breaks down resistance.

#### BE SURE TO PICK THE RIGHT TEAM (JOSHUA 8:7, 18)

Abraham Lincoln was asked during the Civil War, "Are you sure God is on your side?" His thoughtful reply was, "I am not so concerned if God is on our side, but whether we are on God's side." Christians need not worry over who will win. God will win. We need to concern ourselves with being on His side.

As we contemplate important changes in our spiritual lives, let us think on these powerful verses:

- "Now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).
- "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).
- "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:57).
- "In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us" (Romans 8:37).
- "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16).
- "Thanks be to God who always leads us to triumph in Christ" (2 Corinthians 2:14).

Enjoy a victory in Jesus on an old battleground this year.

Endnotes: 1. John Gipson, Keynotes  
House to House Heart to Heart Vol. 24 Number 12