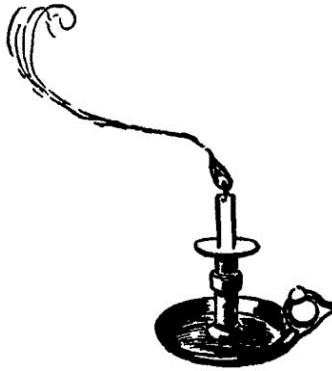


# THE AUSTRALIAN ANABAPTIST

God's solid foundation stands firm. 2 Tim. 2-19

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Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel,  
but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in  
the house.

Matthew 5:15

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For A Conservative Anabaptist Perspective

## **From The Editor's Desk**

### **Feeling after Christ**

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Acts 17:27-28 That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: <sup>28</sup> For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.

Our emotions are a gift from God because our emotions help us feel and experience life.

Our emotions help us to feel life, they give life a sharp edge someone has said, and surely without being able to experience life, life would be drab and meaningless and so our emotions help us to find meaning in life, if we had no feeling there could be no meaning.

We can love because we have emotions, we can be glad because we have emotions, we are sober because we have the emotions under control and we are sad because we have emotions.

A doctor met a preacher one day and asked the preacher, “How do you know there is or ever was a Christ? Have you ever seen Him?”

“No”, the preacher said.

“Have you ever tasted Him?” No.

“Have you ever smelled Him?” No.

He then asked: “Have you ever felt Him?”

And the answer was, “Yes, yes, I felt Him!”

And the doctor asked, “What did He feel like?”

Well, the reply was, “Only those who have felt Him would understand.”

How true.

Well doctor was not satisfied with that he said: “Four out of five senses tell you nothing and the fifth one, the one on feeling, you cannot explain? It is rather weak isn't it?”

But the preacher had an answer he said: “You are a doctor and you deal with pain, did you ever see pain?” Well, the doctor said, no.

“Did you ever taste pain?” Well no.

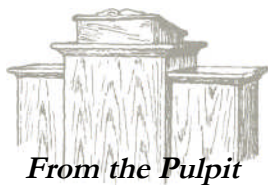
“How about the smell of pain? Did you ever smell one?” Well no.

“Did you ever hear a pain?” No.

“Did you ever feel one?” Yes I have.

“Well what does it feel like?” Well you have to experience it to understand it.

Yes we feel Christ but how do we explain that to someone else? Well basically you just have to experience it in order to understand it. Do you?



## The Christian and His Emotions

*From a message by Brother Stephen M Nolt 2011*

*From the Pulpit*

I extend a greeting in Jesus name, thankful to be here to again look into the Word of God together; I enjoyed the inspiration of the service thus far.

You may turn with me in your Bibles to Psalm 42.

I would like to simply read Psalm 42 verses 9 to 11 as we think about the Christian and his emotions what does God have to say about our emotions. I was drawn to these verses that the Psalmist penned, [Psalm 42:9-11](#) <sup>9</sup> I will say unto God my rock, Why hast thou forgotten me? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy? <sup>10</sup> As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where *is* thy God? <sup>11</sup> Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, *who is* the health of my countenance, and my God.

Go back with me to verse five, [Psalm 42:5](#), at the end of verse five he also says, he begins like verse nine why art thou cast down over my soul and the end of the verse says hope thou in God for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance. Thinking about God's face looking on us.

In verse 11 he talks about the health of my countenance. It is the will of God that your countenance be in health this evening. God wants your countenance to be in health.

The word emotion is used in our title, emotions mean feelings they also mean the expression of those feelings. We sit in a church service and we look across the audience and don't see much emotion, everyone looks fairly calm and peaceful, well I don't know what you're thinking I don't know how you are feeling. The emotions can move us, they can motivate us, and emotions are a gift from God and you can thank God for your emotions. Emotions add colour and meaning to our lives and whilst they are expressed on our face they symbolise what is happening in our hearts.

Now there are a number of related words, thinking about the word emotional, that is an adjective that is used sometimes to describe a disorder, we say someone has an easily triggered emotional reaction or they are upset easily and we call them emotional.

The word emotionalism is a word that was coined much later in time, it is the tendency to regard things emotionally or maybe to have an undue display of emotion, and some of us are more prone to do that than others.

Why do we have a message like this for the Christian? Why do we think about emotions being for a Christian as a condition of their hearts, we have given our lives to the Lord? Well emotions are often an index to what is happening in our lives an index to the condition of our hearts and our feelings give signals as to what is happening in our hearts, they are an indication of the depth of our character or the lack of it. They often give witness to whether the root of bitterness is growing or not.

Now we understand that the emotions often surface sooner in times of stress and perplexity and emotions can be mixed, sometimes when you ask a person how they feel they say they don't know, they don't know how they feel, they have mixed emotions and we know what that is like.

Remember every area of our lives is to glorify God and this is not an area that is exempt from that, how you deal with your emotions will determine whether they will lead you to righteousness or sinfulness. Any emotions that cause us to sin all prevent us from being a service to God, they are not what God intended but rather Satan would have the saints so ruled by their emotions that they can no longer live by faith but by how they feel at the present time and we understand how that works.

Emotions can move us to choose God's way. As we think about emotions think about the songs that are sung at evangelistic meetings and how they appeal to us, not just simply their music but the words as well they appeal to our emotions and our intellect because conversion is more than a response of emotion, it must be more than that, it is a response of the will.

The Apostle Paul reasoned with Felix it says there that Felix trembled, [Acts 24:25](#), I believe his emotions were touched but he did not decide to become a Christian.

Well emotions can keep us from facing reality and that is another reason we look at them, they keep us from facing reality and we understand stress is universal and I think we have all lived long enough to realise that we have come up against some things that we did not know what to do, we can hardly handle them and we would also say that an emotional imbalance is rather common.

We could say that each of us has a tendency to one side of the street or the other and if we let go of the steering wheel we will probably end up in that area.

Emotional stability is not achieved automatically, we would like to look at a number of scriptures as we go throughout the message that guide us as we think about this subject. We understand that parents need self-discipline if they are to teach and to give their children the steady hand they need in growing up.

I would like to divide the message into three parts and think first of all of the various emotions that face us.

You may turn with me to the book of Nehemiah 8 the verse there that is the key to the first emotion; I would like to think about that first emotion as we think about good feelings or happiness, that which brings smiles and laughter to our faces. Our happiness needs to be motivated by our joy.

[Nehemiah 8:10](#) It says for the joy of the Lord is your strength. The joy of the Lord it gives you strength and it is shown as a fruit of the spirit in [Galatians 5:22](#) is love and then it is joy,

Now we all understand that there are feelings we don't always feel happy. It says in [Habakkuk 3:17-18](#) though no crops bear fruit, there is a complete crop failure, yet I will rejoice in the Lord. That is a picture of a person who has stability; they have joy that carries them through.

When you feel like you are facing life and you have no strength to face it you would say you are emotionally spent, when you have no strength to go on check the joy in your life, is the joy that is providing you the strength to go on. Remember true joy is more than fervent happiness or a thing going my way, happiness is about things we feel, happiness is based on happenings and we need something much more stable than that to maintain our joy.

The example in the Scripture of emotional stability as we think about our Lord and many times that He sought strength from His Father, well joy is more than that sensation that is received you would say by professional singing. There is an interesting statement in our church discipline that says this: “Because of the highly emotional appeal of stringed instruments we reject those as part of our practice.”

I had to think about that, how did that statement get there – the highly emotional appeal. Well we understand that singing can touch our emotions and the music has a way of moving us, when the music overpowers the words and becomes the focal point of our listening then it is no longer serving the purpose we intended to, it is no longer building an appreciation for the singing we would say with joy from our hearts.

How can I tell if my happiness, if my good feelings, if my laughter and my smiles are based upon my joy?

Well think about this, when all is quiet then how do I feel, what feelings are present? How do I face disappointment? How do I face trials in my life? Is my joy is stable, is it lasting? How is it with you? Joy must be cultivated if it is to be present, it must be cultivated, joy is not short lived.

Well when we face trials in life we need the joy of God, we need that joy to be our strength.

Now moving away from good feelings I would like to think about some other feelings that come.

Another emotion we think about is anger.

Anger is simply in the strictest sense of the word a strong feeling of displeasure and we understand that, it can also be an intense emotional state that is induced by displeasure. Turn with me to Mark chapter 3.

**Mark 3:5**, I believe this is the only Scripture that I can find that specifically mentions about Jesus’ anger although some would say when He drove the people from the temple, His displeasure as we understand that we could rightfully say He had feelings of anger, (**Matthew 21:12-13, Mark 11:15-17**) in verse four He asked the question to the men in the synagogue He said: Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? To save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when He had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts,

He saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. [Mark 3:4-5](#).

Jesus looked upon them with anger, being grieved. His feelings were stirred but His response was sanctified.

Turn with me to Numbers chapter 20 at who is said to be the meekest man let us look at his response when anger stirred in his heart. Verse 10 is the account of Moses as he was called of God to get water and it seems like his frustration had reached the level where he lost control and in verse 10 Numbers 28 says this: And Moses and Aaron, Gather the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Here now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his Rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because you believe me not to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation in the land which I have given unto them. [Numbers 20:10-12](#).

Moses was condemned for his carnal response when he struck the rock in anger.

[Matthew 5:22](#) says: He that is angry with his brother without a cause is in danger of the judgement.

Anger becomes sin when it prompts that unsanctified response and that unsanctified response could be words it could be actions but it could also be bitter silence.

One other example in the Scriptures about anger was the man Jonah after he had preached to the people of Nineveh he went outside the city and sat under a shelter he made waiting to see what would happen and God said to him: Doest thou well to be angry? Doest thou well to be angry, he was displeased, his anger seemed to control his life. [Jonah 4:4](#). And he had a response that was unsanctified as he responded to God.

Think about Cain and his anger how he killed Abel in his uncontrolled anger, [Genesis 4:8](#), think about the accountability that he faced, think about the reaping.

Anger is said to be the most dangerous of emotions because it is the most unpredictable, the most explosive, anger short circuits love and kindness even reason, it impairs a person's judgement, it destroys relationships, un-

controlled anger that feeds bitterness and we understand what bitterness does to the container that holds it. This Scripture says put off anger, wrath and the malice, [Colossians 3:8](#), anger that is not put off, anger that is not address and confessed will not go away it will continue to damage those who become its victims.

Now why is anger so difficult for many of us to lay aside, to put off, to find victory over? Why is it a sin that seems to dog our footsteps and if we'd for a minute let go of the steering wheel we are off in that direction. I believe because it is the rising displeasure over what we see and tests whether God is actually in control of our lives whether we will utilise the grace of God. Anger burns like a fire and once it is out of control it is without reason and even people of the world realise that anger must be controlled if people are to function.

I think of the response of one man who endeavoured to start a business and I was meeting with him periodically and I finally said to him you are going to need to find a way to control your anger, you really need to find a way. Well he said I'm not a Christian, he said I don't have that power that you do he said: What am I supposed to do?

I wasn't sure what to tell him. How do you control anger without the power of God?

Often we do not find victory over anger because we excuse ourselves, we say “this is just me” or we say “my family has always had this trouble” and so we blame others and do not identify it as the sin that it is, and we do not confess our need for help.

Moving away from anger to another emotion we think about fear.

Fear is that unpleasant feeling, an unpleasant and often strong feeling caused by the anticipation of danger. Fear of company is a loss of courage, a loss of courage to face life and again some of us worry more than others, have more fears than others.

Related to fear is the word anxiety, anxiety is that painful apprehensive uneasiness that goes again with the anticipated deals that may come. We all face fear but some of us face it more than others, some of us tend to be more carefree and face life come what may, we will deal with it somehow.

Fear can be a good thing, it can keep as conscious of safety and as we approach the end times we hear more about the fears. In Luke chapter 21 it



says how men's hearts will fail them for fear of the things coming up on the earth, [Luke 21:26](#).

There are many fears and Jesus taught his followers to lay aside the anxiety about the future needs in Matthew six ([Matthew 6:25-34](#)).

What makes fears difficult to live with if they control us?

Well fear keeps us from being of use to God, it keeps us crawling in our shell, fear paralyses us, fear takes the joy out of living, it takes away our joy and brethren and sisters when our joy is not there it just goes very hard. Well fear takes tremendous energy as well, someone has said that worry is more difficult than working. I'm not sure if that is true or not I imagine it could be, well fear blocks faith, we are to be men and women of faith, when faith would place the matter in God's hands as we kneel before Him and pray to Him and cast our burdens there we are giving it to Him but worry and fear refuse to listen.

Jesus told his disciples: Why are ye fearful ye of little faith? [Matthew 8:26](#). Certainly our life requires a response of faith.

So how do we control fear, what do we do about the fears that come?

We tell children to trust God, we tell them to say that we will trust and not be afraid but what about us as adults have we learnt that quality.

Sometime in your personal devotions read that passage from [Philippians 4:6-9](#), those promises relate to controlling, to taming our worries and fears.

We understand that effective planning and action can serve to tame some fears as well but taming fear only comes real through a personal relationship with God and as we trust Him because of our confidence in Him.

Moving away from fear, we will come back to some of these later; we have the emotion of sorrow.

Sorrow is an expression of grief for the loss that we face or the pain that we feel. The Scripture says in Isaiah 53 that our Lord was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, [Isaiah 53:3](#), He knew what it was to have sadness and pain. Sorrow is a result of men their fall into sin.

We understand that sorrow comes from many different reasons, a number of those reasons we think about as some of us have laid a loved one to rest and that brings us sorrow, it brings a pain that doesn't go away right away, at times our friends disappoint us, at times people will lose out spiritually and we sorrow at the loss as we see them go.

Sometimes we fail in our own spiritual lives and we need to repent and have a productive sorrow for the sins that have grieved our Lord.

Sorrow is a part of life, sorrow is not a wrong emotion, and it has the power to influence us for good. I think about the man Peter as he went away from Jesus trial and the bitter tears that he shed and how productive those tears were, [Matthew 26:75](#), [Luke 22:62](#).

The Scriptures say that sorrow is better than laughter for by sadness of the countenance the heart is made better, [Ecclesiastes 7:3](#).

But sorrow can also represent, while it can represent repentance, sadness and tears can also represent wounded pride and they can also represent self-pity.

I think about the man Ahab who turned his face to the wall after he was disappointed with Naboth's response and he wasn't feeling too good about himself, well Jezebel had a solution that truly would work, [1 Kings 21:4-15](#).

When children shed tears parents must pay attention because those tears are there for a reason, parents must view the children's struggles, and the child's struggles, their tears, from the child's point of view because they are children. Well one of the variations of sadness and sorrow that come to us is this feeling that accompanies discouragement, discouragement that brings us sorrow and sadness, discouragement, depression.

Elijah as he fled from Jezebel face discouragement and he went into the cave and after a bit God asked him why he was there and he said he had been fleeing for his life and he asked God why don't you just take my life. Well he wasn't thinking right, [1 Kings 19:10](#).

That feeling of sorrow that overtakes a person and becomes a force that prevents them from being the person that God wants them to be. Those of us who face this tendency often need help to break free from the discouragement of things that come, we need someone to talk to, someone to encourage us, someone to listen to our problems. Often inferior feelings accompany discouragement and inferior feelings then can be used as an excuse to say well this is where I am, I can't really do anything about it.

Now moving away from emotions as we looked at them in general I would like to think about some emotional problems.

What are some emotional problems we face?

The first one I would like to list is this problem of the emotions controlling us.

Turn with me to Proverbs chapter 16. I thought I had this list of problems in order and the more I preached this sermon I realised that possibly I had better erase the numbers and just simply give the list.

**Proverbs 16:32**, this verse is related directly to anger: He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh the city.

This is a verse explaining to me that the power to rule one's spirit is a power that not everyone has and it takes power to do that.

What about our emotions, what about the emotions controlling us? As a child we go to school and it seems like the person on the other end of the seesaw always weighed more than I did and he could control where I was, whether I could not get off the dirt or where I was so high that I thought I would fall off.

What about our emotions is that the kind of life that we should live, is that what God intended? Should our emotions be ruled by the weather or the rain or the sunshine? How can one be sure that the emotions are not ruled by them, how is this done?

A number of ways this is done, ruling one's spirit is only possible when the power of the spirit rules us. Remember that ruling our emotions is not simply suppressing them, it is more than that, especially to those that know us best they know we can suppress our emotions but in reality sometimes we need to come down to earth and we talk about what is actually there.

Parents must teach their children to control their emotions, to control the crying over hurts, to accept difficulties without complaining, deny them that tendency to self-pity.

But what about us as adults have we learnt the same qualities to control, to rule our spirit?

Jesus in His ministry could see through men, He knew what they were thinking. Another way we control our spirit is that we commit our all to God; we commit our all to God. There is something about our reserved commitment in our lives that robs us we would say of emotional control, it robs us of the power we need to be victorious in our lives it puts victory just out of reach.

Part of a complete commitment to God is that forgiveness that we must experience and give to others, that is part of the complete commitment, to refuse to release someone else and to forgive them as the man did in [Matthew 18:23](#), a very familiar story that we all know, to refuse to forgive someone is to deny ourselves the freedom from guilt that lies upon our own shoulders. We cannot carry guilt and be emotionally stable.

Part of complete commitment is maintaining a clear conscience, there is something about a clear conscience that does something for us that nothing else will, harbouring sin in our lives will have an effect upon our emotions, and it will have an effect upon our control it will keep us from the stability that we seek.

We foster an emotional stability when we utilise all the resources that God has for us and one of those very important resources is what Jesus used to get Himself together and that is His daily devotional time with God, His time of prayer, think about the nights that Jesus spent in prayer, I believe that prepared Him to face those taxing experiences that He would face, I believe His Ministry was an intense Ministry and He had not so much time as to rest but His devotional life was important.

Turn with me to Romans chapter 8, I would like to look at one more aid in controlling our emotions especially as we think about the problems, the tendencies we have that seem to dog our steps in our personal lives. I would like to read [Romans 8:26](#), this verse I believe specifically speaks to our emotions, <sup>26</sup> Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

One aspect of this verse, there are a number of aspects in this verse, but one aspect is the fact it says here that Spirit helps our infirmities and infirmities especially refers to the weakness and a crippling that deals with the mental and emotional difficulties, not with sins but with those things in life that could move us away from God and as we seek the face of God especially in times of emotional turbulence when we don't know how to feel and we don't know what to do next remember that God's Spirit knows exactly where we are, knows and knows exactly what we need to face life.

Well we understand another resource that we must use is the support of brothers and sisters in the Lord and this goes both ways. When have you last encouraged someone whom you thought was facing some trials in life, when have you last asked them how it is going?

Moving away from this thing of control another problem that we face in our emotional lives is this feeling of inferiority and discouragement, and this could be a message in itself but I would simply say a number of things about this, turn with me to Matthew 25 for an example of a man who I believe has an inferiority complex, he had stopped his service to God, this group of people, this is part of the fear group we would say, the feeling of discouragement, this person says I will never be part of the inner group and no one really cares about me.

In [Matthew 25:24-25](#): <sup>24</sup> Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: <sup>25</sup> And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that* is thine.

This man was immobilised by fear and by feeling some inadequacy, in my own words he said it is not really worth starting or trying because you're a difficult person, I have heard that.

Well these people who harbour these type of feelings tend to do exactly what this man did, exactly what Satan wants them to do, they tend to do nothing, they tend to lose their vision of what God has for them.

Think about the spies that went to spy out Canaan and two came back with a courageous report and the others said that they saw these giants and walled cities but what did Caleb say in response to the negative response? He said the giants and the walled cities they are bread for us, they are bread for us. ([Numbers 13](#)).

Do you have a vision in your personal life of the victories that are yet to be won or has the lion kept you inside. ([Proverbs 22:13](#), [Proverbs 26:13](#)) There is something about the Christian life that requires you to be an optimist to go out and face life. Well this feeling of discouragement and inferiority also affects relationships with others it pulls us back from those that love us most.

I think about the one dear sister who said, she said I'm not feeling real good right now, I'm pretty discouraged so I believe I'll stay home from church, I think I'll just stay home because no one really cares.

And what did she do? Did she go where the strength was, where the encouragement was. Well fear pulls us back from those we love fear keeps us from being of service.

Moving away from discouragement I'd like to think about this feeling related to fear, this feeling of super sensitivity.

Often we see this happening in children this feeling of perfectionism where the person has never come to rest in their lives and it affects their emotions. This feeling never leaves a person rested in their thoughts they are always we would say on tiptoe, reaching up and they say self-deprecating things to get out this to compliment them and they begin to have thoughts of anxiety, they feel that God is never satisfied, they become legalistic and then anger begins to set in because of their frustration, they have tried so hard and not having attained, and Satan uses discouragement in their setting to bring a person down.

I would leave that challenge with parents here this evening; Are you pleaseable, do your children know when you are satisfied, how do your children find you? Are you predictable, do they know what to expect. You know as Christians in our personal lives we think about our God with whom there is no variableness or shadow of turning, ([James 1:17](#)), who is the ultimate in stability and predictability. Where do we as parents come out? Do we with patience help the supersensitive child, help them to understand themselves, remember you are in a key position to help them.

Moving away from the inferior feelings and the supersensitive feelings one last feeling I would like to look at is this feeling of superiority.

The Scriptures say for not he that commendeth himself is approved but he that the Lord commendeth, [2 Corinthians 10:18](#). But we still have this tendency to commend ourselves, to think that we are better than others, to seek to impress others with something I'm not and that illustrates a problem.

The superior person seeks to never have anyone see his emotions, the superior person says all is well, I have no problems, I have no challenges in my life everything is just fine. But brethren and sisters we live in a real world of sin and temptation and grief and difficulty and the Christian must be a real person and that means that we are not afraid of our emotions and we are not afraid to share joys and sorrows with those we meet in our brothers and sisters in Christ because like our high priest who was touched with the feelings of our infirmities and tempted in all points as we are. [Hebrews 4:15](#).

How do we overcome these problems, we looked at a number of problems, how do we overcome the problems that we face?

Thinking wrong about ourselves, how do we overcome fears, anger, and emotional stress that come and keep them from ruining our lives?

I would like to give a number of ways we can overcome specific things and again we said this before but we seek the face of God in prayer, we seek the face of God.

Like Jesus in the garden when He faced the cross I am sure He could have used the sleep that night but He instead spent time in prayer, He asked God to take the cup away, [Mark 14:36](#).

And there are times in our lives when we ask God to remove us from the stress we are facing but we accept His will and there is something about accepting His will that gives us peace and gives us strength to go on.

Another way that we overcome is that we are willing to give up the hurts of the past.

Give up the hurts of the past and accept responsibility for how we think about them. Unless we think right about the past there is a certain sense in which we cannot face the future. We mentioned before about our commitment and surrender to God and I would like to say here that surrendering to God is also surrendering to others and seeking help from brothers and sisters in the Lord, let someone else direct our thinking because very likely they have faced some of the same trials in life.

In James there is also a solution to overcoming it says confess your faults one to another that ye may be healed, [James 5:16](#). If we avoid this remedy we are avoiding a solution that God has for us.

Or those of us who face sorrow and loss discuss that sorrow with others, don't do as Elijah and crawl into a dark cave all alone where is no one to talk to. Accept responsibility for your emotions, do not blame others, the Scripture says every man will give account for himself before God, [Romans 14:12](#).

And last but not least how do we overcome?

We also meet the needs of our physical body. The needs of rest and nourishment, there is something about a structured lifestyle that helps we could say emotional stability and this thing of rest is important as well. And I think about a young man who had been awake for a number of day/night cycles and I asked him how he was feeling and he said, O, he said I am all messed up, I don't know how to feel.

Well there is something about the lack of rest that he had become unhinged and he did not know how to feel, how to think.

In the last part of the message we would like to look at God's call to love and to stability.

Turn with me to [2 Timothy 1:7](#), For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. The character of God is permeated by love.

There is something about love it gives meaning to life, love is more than a feeling we would say or an emotion, but love must permeate our lives as well if we are to be what God wants us to be. Love is the vehicle that helps us share the joy and sorrows of others, share the emotions of others we would say, love motivates us to give of ourselves to others, not just to those that love us but sometimes to those who do not return that feeling, that love.

Greater love has no man then this that a man lay down his life for his friends, [John 15:13](#).

Sometimes people say that they feel like they are unloved, no one loves them. Remember this that when God's love is shed abroad in our hearts ([Romans 5:5](#)) then we don't worry about whether others love us or not because our needs are met.

We enjoy being loved; we enjoy the love that is returned to us but remember we choose to love even when we do not feel like it.

Well perfect love casts out fear, [1 John 4:18](#).



God's love in our hearts gives us motivation and His grace gives us the power to be the people whose countenance is in health, who have the joys of sins forgiven on their faces and who know what it is to crucify the flesh and to lay aside and to say no to wrong desires.

This evening I would leave this appeal with the youth. You prepare for life tomorrow by being in control of the emotions of your life today by being a balanced person today that will prepare you to face what you will encounter in life.

I would leave this challenge with parents this evening as you guide your children, as you guide your home.

Your children learn by watching you respond to life, as you respond to joys and disappointments, they know how you think about yourselves. They know whether you have control over your anger and the course that you set them when they are young will affect them through their life and while they will make their own choices someday the way you make decisions, the way you accept life will affect the way that they accept life

Turn to [Hebrews 4:14-16](#), it is interesting to look at Jesus emotions throughout His life but here it says, <sup>14</sup> Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* profession. <sup>15</sup> For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin. <sup>16</sup> Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

God knows exactly what you face in your personal life seek His face and His grace.

We look forward someday brothers and sisters to an eternity where there will be no more tears, no temptation, no pain; they will not be present there nor remembered

Thanks be to God that gives us the victory today through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Is that victory yours?

May God bless your walk with Him.



## THE CONDITIONS OF PEACE

In a world of unrest and turmoil, one realizes that it is priceless to be at peace with God, having accepted His conditions of peace. As we know the Scriptures and God's plan for His creation, one ponders how the evil one has caused so many to miss the real purpose of their lives. May we always be willing to change if, perhaps, we have been misled by our self-life or by misunderstanding.

Jesus said in Luke 14:31-32, "Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace."

Reading this parable, let us consider ourselves as the one who is going to meet the one who has twenty thousand. Due to our natural birth, upon reaching the age of accountability, we found ourselves in a kingdom of ten thousand, which consisted of Satan, the evil spirits, and our old nature, self. The binding powers of this kingdom would not surrender us. We did not want to face the fact that we were going to face the King with twenty thousand. As we became accountable to the Law and understood that this "nation" was under a curse and would someday be totally annihilated, this knowledge caused us to begin to seek conditions of peace.

Let us look into the truth that is taught in the Scripture about these conditions: "But without faith it is impossible to please him" (Hebrews 11:6). "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Psalm 111:10).

One thing that must come to bear upon us is that this King is the One we will meet someday in the Judgment. As this becomes a heartfelt conviction, we are moved to send an ambassage of peace to this, our Maker, with whom we are not at peace. We then seek conditions of peace from the Great King, and we begin to realize how far from His kingdom we actually are. Making the choice to turn to His kingdom is the first step in repentance, and with it follows an enlightening. We begin to see clearly which kingdom we have been in and that we have been against the plan of God. Repentance brings remorse that speaks of sorrow toward God. We also make confession with our mouths and lives that we are forsaking our old country.

The Scripture says, "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and

looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62). In desiring conditions of peace, we must make an allegiance to Christ's kingdom that will not allow us to ever return back to the kingdom of resistance against God. For men, this is a deathblow to their self-life and an awakening that they really were serving self. Yet, this alone does not bring us into favour with the King from whom we desire pardon.

This brings us to the point of salvation's plan that we must accept by a living faith. The Law said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). That places you and me in a position of death. In this dilemma, we are doomed with no hope. All the repenting and committing ourselves to God stand as no merit in our stead. They only reveal and prepare our hearts for the following condition. If we would die for our sins, then we would also die in our sins estranged from God. We would still meet this King who is coming with twenty thousand without peace. Where is our hope? Who can make peace for us?

This King Who cometh, being a Sovereign of judgment and mercy, in His infinite foreknowledge saw our plight before the foundation of the world was laid. Jesus Christ, being of God and the express image of His love and mercy, made an agreement with His Father that He would answer to the just law of the Holy One and die in our place. On our part, if we come repenting of our sins and committing our lives to God's kingdom and accept Christ's sacrifice, God pardons us upon that faith. Ephesians 2:14 reads, "For he is our peace." We must accept that of our own we come with no merit to receive this peace. As we look to Christ's death in man's stead and accept by faith that this is for us, God is pleased that we believe in the merits of His precious Son. At this point, He accepts us into His kingdom, and we are at peace with God, this great King.

This brings us to the question of what is the nature of this kingdom? How will we love and serve the King's Son who died for us to grant us pardon? Who had the power to go into that old kingdom and deliver us from the clutches of its powers? Many scriptures deserve our meditation.

Having made a way of peace and desiring to bring His creation back into fellowship with Him leaves no question as to why His kingdom is to be a kingdom of peace. We see that God is sovereign and vengeance belongs to Him alone. The citizens of His country should not rise up in resistance against their fellowmen in any form. But they will love all men, desiring to lead them to these conditions of peace with this great King.

As the world reels in war and turmoil, it behoves us as God's kingdom to walk circumspectly, leaving a peace witness in all of our dealings, activities, and attitudes.

The peace doctrine has at its very heart the fact that had it not been for Jesus, we were doomed eternally. How can we then feel justified in doing anything other than desiring to obey His peaceful teaching? Dear readers, how do our lives speak today of our peace witness? Is there any identity in your possessions that speak of the old kingdom? What would we think of a doomed soldier who sought the clemency of the winning side but maintained his identity with the enemy kingdom?

At this time, may we as the peaceable kingdom of Christ be always ready to give an answer of the reason of the hope (peace) that lies within us. Should we be called upon to give an answer to those responsible for the affairs of the world, may our lives have left this testimony that we have no abiding place here, but we have sought a heavenly country.  
O land of rest eternal, for thee we long!

*Brother Kendall*



## WISDOM

"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17).

This verse is an excellent definition of true wisdom. To the carnal mind, this might seem like a strange way of explaining wisdom. To the worldly man, wisdom can only come by much learning and lots of experience. Although this is another type of wisdom, the Christian should always put godly wisdom first.

Let us take a look at where the two different types of wisdom can take us. First, we will look at what the world calls wisdom. People will spend much time, effort, and money to learn more about subjects too numerous to mention. To obtain this kind of wisdom takes years and many hours spent studying many different books and writings on any given subject. A person could even study and try to figure out the prophecies and deep meaning of the book of Revelation. Although Bible study is good and, in fact, needful for a Christian's survival, too much intellectual study can cause a person to

forget the simple biblical truths.

2 Timothy 3:7 reads, "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." This would seem to me like a good example of someone studying the book of Revelation but totally forgetting or leaving out the teachings found in other books of the Bible. A person may spend years in different schools and listen to many instructors, trying to find out a little bit more about the subject he is studying. When he reaches old age, he will still not totally understand everything about what he was studying. However, he may receive many words

To scoff means to mock or jeer. This would be the opposite of awe and reverence. We bemoan the fact that fear of God and His judgments have waned greatly. This may be especially true in the western world, which was at one time largely influenced by Christian thought. Many of the laws of these lands had their roots in the Law of Moses. As fewer people pay attention to the Bible, children no longer go to Sunday school, and no reference to God is allowed in the countries' classrooms, the fear of God is lost. Much of the so-called wisdom of the world says there are no absolutes. This is much like the disrespectful child saying to its caregiver, "You're not my mother," and, therefore, he or she feels no obligation to obey.

One would have to place a good part of the responsibility of the waning of the fear of God on the shoulders of those who professed Christianity. Within these ranks in the past century, much of the teaching in the Bible has been minimized or neglected. This has broken down the awe and reverence that bring obedience because God is God. Many professing Christians today have a much thinner Bible than was originally written!

Due to this, the true Christian in the church is under a continuous and subtle influence that laws can be broadly interpreted (as they are by many judges). Parental laxity and permissiveness gives that same message. Things that should be black and white are blended to produce grey areas that leave much to an individual's own interpretation. This, in turn, affects how an individual hears and interprets the preaching and teaching within the church. The scoffing spirit can easily take root in the heart, saying, "It's not that serious or important."

Such a spirit soothes the conscience and quenches the Spirit. When fear wanes, people do not pay attention to warnings or teachings. Eve's disobedience in the Garden was a direct result of Satan beguiling her to not fear God. That loss of fear caused her to listen to the question, "Yea, hath God

said?" (Oh, He's probably not real serious).

Today, masses of people are taking that approach to the biblical teaching of self-denial, cross bearing, obedience, judgment according to works, and eternal punishment in hell fire for the ungodly. Within the church, our struggle would not be in denying the above but in a nonchalant approach to the teaching and preaching. This expresses itself in not changing anything until threatened with discipline.

To revive the fear of God among us, ministers need to preach and teach clearly the judgments of God and the realities of hell fire (retribution). So do parents. It is not wrong to speak to children about hell, nor should parents or ministers apologize for doing so. Further, timely discipline needs to be exercised in the home and church to establish that what is said and taught is indeed truth.

We must beware of worldly thought and modern Christendom's lack of awe and reverence, for it is a deadly leaven.

*Brother Robert*



## CONTINUING THE CONQUEST

Bible stories of the children of Israel and the life of Jesus have, from childhood, provided us with many vivid accounts of how a great, powerful, and loving God took keen interest in the daily welfare of His people. It is well that these stories are read to our children, drawing their attention to the reality of the happenings.

"Yes, the boy had only enough lunch for one young appetite, but with that little lunch, Jesus fed more people than were together at the last conference."

"How hard it must have been to keep a baby brother quiet for three months. Why, you could not even tell your friends! And then to put him in an ark of bulrushes in the biggest river you ever saw."

The youth boy, David, simply asked, "Is there not a cause?" and proceeded to lead the armies of Israel not only to battle but also to victory.

The widow of Zarephath gathered "two sticks"—it would not take much fire to bake a "handful of meal" for her son and herself. Through faith and obedience, that handful provided nourishment for "many days."

Consider Daniel, some ninety years old, being tested on his loyalty to God. All these things really happened to real people having feelings like us. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our

learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

Many rich instructions can be taken from the biblical accounts of the children of Israel. Our hearts can relate to the bondage they endured under hard taskmasters. For a time, the promise of deliverance only brought greater turmoil. To them, being separated unto God became a journey instead of a destination. Even so, God leads His children through various phases today, through Red Seas, across deserts, to Mount Sinai's, carrying us, instructing us, and providing for us.

He would also like to lead us to maturity and usefulness in His service, a certain consecration of crossing the Jordan. At times the Promised Land is referred to as our eternal rest, and rightly so. But considering the conflicts and battles that awaited the Israelites, we could also view the crossing of the Jordan as a phase of our Christian lives when God calls us to greater consecration and service, as well as to greater blessings.

Let us turn back the pages of history to the children of Israel in the newly possessed land of Canaan. For various reasons, not all the dwellers of the land were driven out before Israel settled into life in the land of promise. The Gibeonites made a league with Joshua and the princes of the people. The league was honoured, even though it was contrived treacherously. These people were then condemned to a servant's role, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. As God's people remained obedient to Him, it seems that these servants provided useful service for the congregation, and even for the altar of the Lord. We do not read that they were ever converted to the religious beliefs of the people of God.

Advances in technology continue to fascinate us and boggle our minds. These things are inanimate and, in physical makeup, are not evil in themselves. We do well to consider the driving forces behind these advances. We are told that the computer industry is entertainment driven. As we see the audio and visual capabilities of the newer models, it is not hard to believe that entertainment and self-gratification are key factors. Even in the business world, technology offers so much that appeals to our old nature. We live in a "now" age. Being able to communicate with whomever, from wherever, whenever we want to, gives us a tremendous sense of being in control of our lives. The ability to control our business and search for vast amounts of information with no more effort than a few keystrokes gives a satisfying sense of power as with the children of Israel, when we allow



God His rightful place of control and power in our lives, these modern things can assist us, and even in the service of the Lord, without posing a great threat to us.

Going on in history, we find that God allowed some other nations to remain in the land. "Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof; Namely, five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites ... And they were to prove Israel by them, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord, which he commanded their fathers by the hand of Moses" (Judges 3:1-4). The gods (the theme of their devotion) worshipped by these nations continually tempted Israel, causing every generation to make a conscious choice as to whom they would serve. It would seem that God allowed this to take place so that His servants would be volunteers. When God was accepted as the leader of the people, these nations posed no great threat. When God was forsaken, these nations rose up to rule the people of God.

The thought of Christian life being a warfare is also presented in the above mentioned scriptures. Those who have left friends, family, and culture to become one with the people of God are very much aware of "all the wars of Canaan." Seeing the hand of God open a way through Jordan and standing in amazement as strongholds come tumbling down through obedience are vivid experiences. For the generations following, the warfare may not be as dramatic, but the battle to overcome the "five lords of the Philistines" is continual. These five lords were rulers of five city-states banded together as one nation. We could liken this to our five senses (smell, sight, hearing, taste, touch) banded together in our natural bodies. That which pleases these senses becomes of utmost importance if self is allowed to rule. There is no high-tech approach to self-denial. It takes willingness to be "taught to war." Basic, everyday self-denial will not only be in theory but also in giving up those wants of ours that conflict with the Spirit's prompting. When we are submitted to the Lord, these same senses are useful in accomplishing the work of the Lord in this world.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23).

May this be our faith and practice!

*Brother Lauren*