



ALLELUIA!
He Is Risen!

VOICE OF CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

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WHEN THE NEW WEARS OFF CONFORMING TO THE IMAGE OF GOD

Anything new has a certain appeal about it, an unknown dimension. Our treatment of the new is somewhat different than that of the old. Allow me to explain. A young boy, my neighbor, was given a new four wheeler recently which became the sparkle of his eye. He kept it chained to a post on the carport because of the fear of someone stealing it. No mud was allowed to remain on it more than a few hours. In his eyes, it is probably the finest wheeler around. After a couple of months the new began to wear off and everything that dazzled him earlier seemed to be fading. No longer is it chained to the post, kept washed or bragged about. You see, the new has worn off. Even though the new wears off as it does with almost every-thing, something begins to take its place. In most cases it is appreciation. When something has been good to you or served you well then you begin to both appreciate it and be thankful for it. The unknown is replaced with the known. The known comes only with usage. The four wheeler has now taken on a new role with the young man, for now he can use it without the fear of scratching it or losing it.

Our spiritual lives are no different than the aforementioned. Our relationship with God begins by keeping it clean, polished, tied to the post and with bragging rights. That's good but our relationship must take on a new dimension. We must learn to walk without the constant threat of losing something or the frailty of breaking it. We move from the new to appreciation and then to thankfulness. We become so familiar with our Lord that we have a workable relationship without the drag of the new tugging along at our heels. New never really disappears, it just takes on a new face in the form of appreciation and thankfulness.

Pastor

For this is the will of God, your sanctification (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

In a personal sense, God's will for our lives is that we conform to the image of God, something the apostle Paul makes clear in 1 Thessalonians 4:3. In his letter to Roman Christians, Paul writes, "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29) and adds in 1 Timothy 1:5, "The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." Divine guidance will never come to those whose primary goal is not first and foremost conforming to the image of God.

There is no instruction in the Bible concerning career choices, where we live, or who we should marry. There is, however, an abundance of instruction on how we are to relate to our employer and behave on the job we already have (Colossians 3:22-25). And there is much about how to relate to one another (Colossians 3:10-14) and live with our families (Colossians 3:18-21).

The Bible overwhelmingly instructs that to do God's will means living in harmony with God and man. "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend the whole law and the prophets." (Matthew 22:37-40).

The whole purpose of the Bible is to teach us how to have a relationship with God and live in harmony with one another. We do this by assuming our responsibilities for today and trusting God for tomorrow.

I'm not sure the Lord cares primarily whether you are a carpenter, teacher or doctor. But He does care what kind of carpenter, teacher or doctor you are. Determine to be the person He has called you to be. No one can prevent you from being God's person except you.

ANNOUNCEMENT

**THE CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH
YOUNG ADULT CLASS
WILL HAVE A RUMMAGE SALE AT THE CHURCH
ON SATURDAY, MAY 5TH, 6 A.M. TO 12 NOON
PRE-PRICED DONATIONS WOULD BE APPRECIATED.**

CONTACT KIM GUILLOT FOR INFO AT 435-7644

COMMITMENT—A word many fear, because it means having to be and do things that don't fit into your daily routine, or your lifestyle. Or maybe you figure the cost will be too high and it will disrupt your budget. Or what if God calls you to be more involved in a ministry, and give up the things you like to be and do. Commitment can be these and many other things. Jesus's life and death, displayed the fullest measure of commitment. Our Father expects no less from us than the best we can give, do and be. He knows our limits, and the limits of glory He has set for us.

WORD

Our Holy Bible (Sante Biblia-in Spanish) has been considered the God inspired writings of saints and apostles who have reverently told the accounts of God's people, as well as the very words spoken by Jesus on this earth. There is an air of intellectual arrogance by many people regarding the accuracy of the Bible. Yes, there have been many editors and copyists that down through the ages may have been the source of errors or mistakes. But the truth is that these people have made their life work trying to get others to doubt that the Bible is true. Scrolls found in caves in the Holy Land, detail the books of the Old Testament and verify in vivid detail, just how accurate our Bible really is. The book of Isaiah is the outstanding example. Nearly three thousand years old, it reads exactly as the modern Bible reads. This is not accidental. While it is true that some of the books are not set in chronological order, the facts are nevertheless accurate. There is an abundance of writers that would attempt to equate God with human characteristics, thus bringing God down to human levels. They too are in the process of satan's work. God understands humans, and our frailties, but there is no part of God that is human. What God is, is divine. The Bible, while telling of the tribulations of God's people, in a manner that man can understand, clearly demonstrates that there is a divine being at the controls of the world's destiny. Conquerors come and go, madmen rule over nations and destroy millions, yet our Bible tells us that even with the abundance of sparrows in the world, not one falls to earth without the Father's knowledge. Not a single animal or insect exists without God's awareness of it's existence. Thus the Bible is not a random account of man's attempt to find God, but of God's record of His dealings with man in order to reveal Himself to man. Taken over all, the Bible clearly shows that there is an omnipresence which is in complete control throughout. It is God's way of guiding man's development in His relationship with God. We learn from the recorded experiences of man from ancient to modern times.

The "Word" became called the "Word" because it has always been accepted as the Word of God. A third century monk went to Jerusalem and spent several years gathering and compiling all of the known books of the ancient Jewish Law, and the books about the examples of Godly history. Together with the more recently written books and epistles of the first century, he compiled more or less what we today regard as our Bible. Later Ecumenical Councils ruled that some of the things that Saint Jerome had gathered, while excellent for historical value, were not regarded as the inspired Word of God, or written under divine inspiration. All of the existing writings had been in Latin, Greek and Hebrew. Jerome brought them all together, with their translations into the final Latin which endured until the thirteenth century when it was finally translated a little at a time into English. King James of England authorized the final translation into what we today call our Bible. There have been many more recent printings with more up-to-date language, but it is still God's Word. That Word teaches us of God, and Jesus, but it also accomplishes a work within us.

Yes, we are to keep large portions of the Bible in our hearts and in our memories but we are also to make habit the daily reading of the Word. Is there a purpose to this? Yes. It is the daily healing and comfort that the Word brings to us. We live in a muddled antagonistic hate filled world of Christ haters. God is not revered; His name is used to curse. To be told to be damned, with the use of God's name, is the most horrible curse that satan could put in man's mouth. This curses not only the hated man, but God as well. This curse is uttered on the air waves every day. We need the blessed comfort of the Word of God to counter these awful sayings. When we are disturbed by the day's horrors, and saddened by the things that go on around us at every turn, we need the recuperative words of the Bible to bring us back to reality. When our own portion of faith has dwindled and needs to be replenished, we need the recovery of the word of God's Word to bring us back to reality. God's reality. Paul tells us that we are aliens in a strange world. Ours is not to succeed in this world; ours is to be able to endure it until we are taken to our home with Jesus. The home that He has gone to prepare for us.

Daniel Webster is quoted as saying, "If there is anything in my thoughts or style to command, it is due to my parents who deserve the credit for instilling in me the early love of the scriptures." He also says that if we abide by these scriptural principles, we as a nation will advance and prosper. If we neglect the teaching of the generations of the Bible, then sudden catastrophe and calamity will overwhelm us without warning and will bury all our glory in profound obscurity. George Washington once said, "It is impossible to govern the world without God, and the Bible." Yet in today's world, satan has succeeded in getting God's Word legislated out of our daily lives. All under the guise of "separation of church and state." There is no such phrase in our constitution. It merely says that there shall be no law set by Congress against any religion. Later judges (themselves lawless haters of Christ) have devised the phrase about separation of church and state. What the Bible says is that for better or worse, God alone appoints those in power. It would seem to follow then, that those who aspire to power would seek God's favor. This is not the case however. Lip service is paid to godly principles, just long enough to get elected, and then God is conveniently forgotten.

Christ is the center and the heart of the Bible. His appearance on the earth is the central event of history. The Old Testament sets the stage for it, the New Testament describes it. When our spirits lag, we can be renewed and replenished by reading the Word. God's Word. This can not be dispensed with if we wish to live a Christian life, our well-being depends on it. Let us live so that God's Word is reflected in us. God bring blessings on us all.

Bro. Vic Clayton

FELLOWSHIP Before I started writing this, I was thinking about church, and how much I love being at our church in particular. I really don't know where to start, but I was thinking about people who don't seem to have much hope. They come to church as though it were some sort of anecdote. They are constantly searching for something in their lives to

change. Possibly for things to get better for them. As I looked closer into these situations, I saw something I never had before. Most all people, regardless of how active or inactive or whatever station in life, are seeking something—perhaps fulfillment, a quick fix. Just something to lead them in the right direction. Maybe something to get them through the week. They cling to every morsel that comes their way as though they were waiting for a gigantic awakening that will transform their lives in a split second.

That is the moment I heard one word spoken to me; and that word is **fellowship**. Fellowship is what happens when we come together to worship the Lord. Not coming to expect a big bang to change everything around in our lives and make them perfect. The Father doesn't mind giving us things. Oh, and by the way, He's already given us the Kingdom!

All of us represent the Lord here on this earth. When someone is blessed, no matter what the blessing may be, we rejoice with them. We rejoice in the fact that the Father has touched that person's life in some fashion. Sometimes we desire to see God's work in the lives of others and we will drive a hundred miles or more to see someone receive a miracle in their lives.

What the Lord is dealing with me about is our fellowship with Him. Our own personal fellowship with the Father. The Lord showed me a table. He let me see people under the table, seemingly grabbing every crumb that fell from the table. These crumbs or small morsels of food represented other people's blessings. In other words, to hear of someone else's blessing is a blessing indeed. But for the hearer it is an indirect blessing. The Lord spoke to me and said, "You cannot grow from other people's blessings. The effect is only short term." What the Father was saying is that we need our experiences with Him. Because hearing someone else's blessings is good, but experiencing your own times with the Lord is better. It is more personal to the one being blessed and the effects are not short lived.

Now getting back to the fellowship. When we realize our potential in this Christian life, or at least what the Father says we are entitled to, then we will know that the Father never intended for us to be on the floor picking up crumbs. But to be at the table eating with the Master. To have hope in whatever we put our hands; to "seize the day," and to know that the Father is with us in every endeavor.

So, the Lords wants to have a very close personal relationship with us. Anyone who invites you to dinner as a guest has already honored you and given you the right to sit at the head of his table. In Revelations 3:20, the Word says, "**Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with Me.**" I believe this verse of scripture best describes the fellowship the Lord wants and desires to have with each one of us. We have been given a great honor as well as a great privilege; to be seated in heavenly places with the Lord!!!

May God Bless You All,

Bro. Neal Emfinger, Jr.

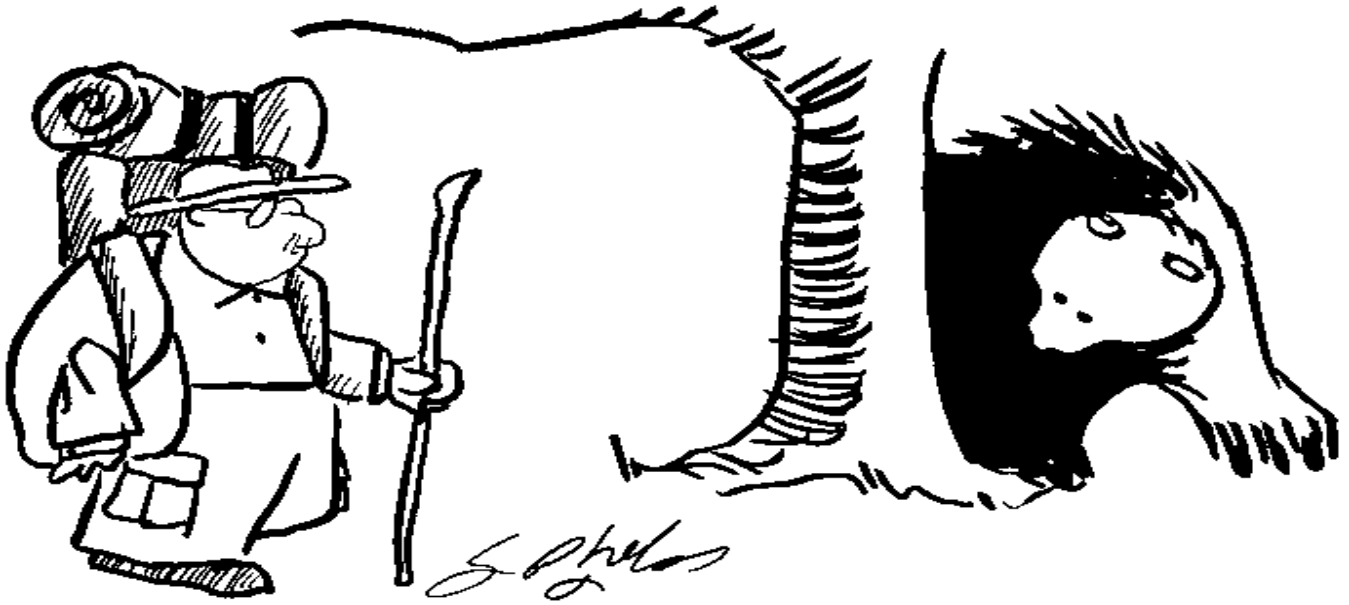
THE DUKE Most of you know John Wayne as an actor. You may not know what happened to him before he died. This is that story!!!

Robert Schuller's teenage daughter, Cindy, was in a motorcycle accident and had to have her leg amputated. John Wayne was a big fan of Robert Schuller. He heard Dr. Schuller say on one of his programs that his daughter had been in an accident and had to have her leg amputated. John Wayne wrote a note to her saying, "Dear Cindy, sorry to hear about your accident. Hope you will be all right." Signed, John Wayne.

The note was delivered to her and she decided she wanted to write John Wayne a note in reply. She wrote, "Dear Mr. Wayne, I got your note. Thanks for writing to me. I like you very much. I am going to be all right because Jesus is going to help me. Mr. Wayne, do you know Jesus? I sure hope you know Jesus, Mr. Wayne, because I cannot imagine Heaven being complete without John Wayne being there. I hope, if you don't know Jesus, that you will give your heart to Jesus right now. See you in Heaven." Signed, Cindy.

She had just put that letter in an envelope, sealed it, and written across the front of it "John Wayne" when a visitor came into her room to see her. He said to her, "What are you doing?" She said, "I just wrote a letter to John Wayne, but I don't know how to get it to him." He said, "That's funny, I am going to have dinner with John Wayne tonight at the Newport Club down at Newport Beach. Give it to me and I will give it to him." She gave him the letter and he put it in his coat pocket.

There were twelve of them that night sitting around the table for dinner. They were laughing and cutting up and the guy happened to reach in his pocket and felt that letter and remembered. John Wayne was seated at the end of the table and the guy took the letter out and said, "Hey, Duke, I was in Schuller's daughter's room today and she wrote you a letter and wanted me to give it to you. Here it is." They passed it down to John Wayne and he opened it. They kept on laughing and cutting up and someone happened to look down at John Wayne. He was crying. One of them said, "Hey, Duke, what is the matter?" He said (and can't you hear him saying it), "I want to read you this letter." He read the letter. Then he began to weep. He folded it, put it in his pocket, and he pointed to the man who delivered it to him and said, "You go tell that little girl that right now, in this restaurant, right here, John Wayne gives his



Pastor Elgin's spiritual retreat brought him closer to God than he ever expected.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP
994 Willie Hill Road
Gilbert, La. 71336

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MAY THE
GRACE
OF THE LORD
BE UPON
YOU