

House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 27 NUMBER 12

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Palm Beach Lakes CHURCH of CHRIST

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SUNDAY

Bible Study..... 9:00 a.m.
Worship 10:00 a.m.
Worship 6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Bible Classes..... 7:00 p.m.

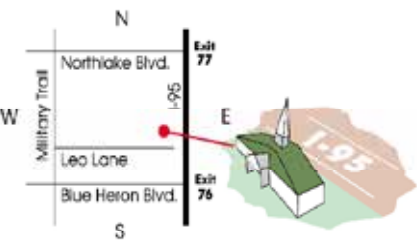
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“Why me, Lord?” We have all asked it. Why does it always have to rain on my parade? Why did this have to happen to me? Why my child? Why my marriage? Why my job? Why? Why? Why?

The answer may be found in an obscure Old Testament passage where God is pictured as sitting over a refiner’s fire making silver of His people. Malachi wrote, “He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord an offering in righteousness” (Malachi 3:3).

A woman read this verse in Bible class and was curious enough to seek out a silversmith to see what it meant. She found him sitting before a crucible, gazing intently into a boiling pot. She asked, “Do you have to sit here all the time or just come back when it is finished?” He replied, “I have to keep my eye on the crucible. If it gets too hot, the silver is injured. I know the process of purifying is com-

pleted when I see my own image reflected in the silver.”

The answer to “Why me?” is found in the silversmith’s shop.

THE REFINER’S POT

God values us far more than a prospector does his “mother lode,” a miser does his coins, an addict does his fix, or a mother does her newborn (Psalm 116:15; Isaiah 43:4). He wants—and demands—the best for us. Just as the refiner’s job is to increase the value of his product by removing impurities, God sees His job as removing the impurities—sins—from us.

Lehman Strauss knew the heartache of suffering. In the midst of dealing with his wife’s stroke, he wrote a book entitled *In God’s Waiting Room: Learning through Suffering*. As he attempted to better understand the events that had moved into his life, he likened his experience to childhood memories of his mother making a cake.



Dr. Strauss recalled the various ingredients—flour, baking powder, shortening, raw eggs—that went into a cake. By themselves they were not very enjoyable snacks, but when properly mixed together and baked for the correct length of time, they collectively produced a delicious dessert. In our lives we experience ingredients that seem unpalatable, and our temptation is to tell God that He is ruining everything. At those times, we will find greater strength and peace when we acknowledge that God knows what He is doing.¹

What kind of furnace does the Refiner use? He uses the furnace of affliction, physical injury, disease, prolonged sickness (2 Corinthians 12:7–8), difficulty in rearing our children, problems with parents, financial reverses, or other overwhelming cares of life. Such suffering is an effective teacher in the great school of life. Some important lessons are learned only at her feet. Robert Browning Hamilton wrote the following:

I walked a mile with Pleasure, she
chattered all the way;
But left me none the wiser, for all she
had to say.
I walked a mile with Sorrow and
ne'er a word said she;
But, oh, the things I learned from her
when Sorrow walked with me!²

At the same time, God watches to see that the fire never gets so hot that it injures us. “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the

way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13). These things hurt us, but they do not permanently injure us—unless we turn from the Refiner.

THE REFINER'S PURPOSE

Amy Carmichael wrote,

A wise master never wastes his servant's time. No matter what set of circumstances we receive, God is not wasting our time. He is educating us; He is improving us; He is molding us. A young woman was suffering greatly and confided to an older Christian friend: “If God loves me as you say He does, why did He make me so?” The older woman replied, “He is making you now.” God's purpose is to prepare us for heaven.³

The Refiner wants to make heaven attractive to us (2 Corinthians 4:16–5:1; Philippians 1:21–23; Hebrews 11:10; Colossians 3:1–2). It is through our tears that we see the farthest into heaven. Hard times can build good character (James 1:2–4; 1 Peter 1:7).

The Refiner wants to test our faith (Genesis 22:1; 1 Corinthians 3:12–15). The worthiness of the ship is not determined while it rides at ease in the harbor, but rather when it rides the waves of a storm. Our faith is worthless if it cannot get us through life's storms.

The Refiner wants to teach us to appreciate our blessings (Luke 17:17; Colossians 3:15). Domesticated bullfinches are placed in a dark room for several weeks before they learn to sing. When brought into sunlight, the bullfinch's song is sweeter and more beautiful than it would otherwise be. God often takes us into a dark room of suffering so that when we come back into life's sunshine, our song of praise will be sweeter than ever before.

The Refiner wants us to learn to comfort others (2 Corinthians 1:3–7). It is difficult to really feel compassion for someone if we do not know what he is going through. But when we have “walked a mile in his moccasins,” we can feel sorry for the one with blisters. Suffering can help us help others. One remarked, “I asked for health that I might achieve. I was made weak that I might do better things.”⁴

The divine Refiner wants us to learn to trust Him (Luke 14:11; Proverbs 16:18;

James 4:10; Jeremiah 10:23; 2 Corinthians 12:9). Abraham Lincoln said, “I have often been driven to my knees by the sincere conviction that there was nowhere else to go.”

THE REFINER'S PRODUCT

As the refiner told the Bible class student, silver is ready when he sees his image in its reflection. God also looks to see His image in our lives. Paul wrote, “We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord” (2 Corinthians 3:18; cf. Romans 8:29; Colossians 3:10).

A silversmith may make many pieces over the course of his days, but only a few of them are deemed worthy of display in his own house. God is fashioning of us what He wants to display in His own house. Ralph Waldo Emerson was once approached by a concerned and inquiring person who said, “Mr. Emerson, they tell me that the world is coming to an end.” Emerson calmly replied, “Never mind, we can get along without it.”⁵ When God finishes refining us, we all will be very happy “doing without this world” and its suffering.

Endnotes

- ¹ *In God's Waiting Room: Learning through Suffering*, Lehman Strauss, 1984. pp. 75–76.
- ² *Along the Road*, <https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/along-road>.
- ³ https://s3.amazonaws.com/bsfl-media/biblestudiesforlife/files/2016/03/honesttoGod_session_6_text.pdf.
- ⁴ <https://www.wvtf.org/civil-war-series/2019-12-15/an-unknown-confederate-soldier>.
- ⁵ <https://wacriswell.com/sermons/1946/the-new-israel/>.





A Cup of Coffee

A group of alumni, established in their careers, got together to visit their old university professor. Conversation soon turned to complaints about stress in work and life. Offering his guests coffee, the professor came in with a large pot of coffee and an assortment of cups—porcelain, plastic, glass, crystal, some plain looking, some expensive, some exquisite—telling them to help themselves to the coffee.

When all the students had a cup in hand, the professor said, “If you noticed, all the nice-looking, expensive cups were taken, leaving the plain and cheap ones. While it is but normal for you to want the best for yourselves, that is the source of your problems and stress. Be assured that the cup itself adds no quality to the coffee in most cases. It is just more expen-

sive; in some cases it even hides what we drink. What all of you really wanted was coffee, not the cup, but you consciously went for the best cups, and then you began eyeing one another’s cups.

“Consider this: life is the coffee. The jobs, money, and position in society are the cups. They are just tools to hold and contain life, and the type of cup we have does not define nor change the quality of life we live. Sometimes, by concentrating only on the cup, we fail to enjoy the coffee God has provided us.”

God brews the coffee, not the cups. . . . Enjoy your coffee.

“I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content.”

PHILIPPIANS 4:11



God’s Tattoo

There are some cultures that encourage tattoos. These tattoos may have tribal significance. Other cultures may accept tattoos as simply pretty, but some frown upon tattoos that are visible for all to see.

What is interesting is that God says He has a “tattoo.” In Isaiah 49:14, the people of Israel say that God has forgotten them. But God says He has not forgotten them. Verse 16 reads, “See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands.” God does not have physical hands. He uses this symbolism to make the point that He does not forget His people.

God has His people’s names written on His palms. Most tattoos are on the side of a person’s arms, on the back, or on the legs. If a tattoo is in these places, clothing will usually cover it up. But clothing rarely covers the hands. One’s palms are constantly visible. Whatever is on the palms is a constant reminder.

Is your name written on God’s palms? Do you study your Bible? Do you obey the Bible? If you do not, your name is not written on God’s palms. Make sure God writes your name on His palms.

—Mark McWhorter, Wisdom’s Corner

“Rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”

LUKE 10:20

God’s Plan for Saving Man

Divine Love: John 3:16

God’s Grace: Ephesians 2:8

Christ’s Blood: Romans 5:9

Holy Spirit’s Word: Romans 1:16

Sinner’s Faith: Acts 16:31

Sinner’s Repentance: Luke 13:3

Sinner’s Confession: Romans 10:10

Sinner’s Baptism: Acts 22:16

Christian’s Love: Matthew 22:37

Christian’s Work: James 2:24

Christian’s Hope: Romans 8:24

Christian’s Endurance: Revelation 2:10

How Adam Had It Easy

1. He was the only man who has never been compared to the man she could have married.
2. He had no in-laws to drop in.
3. There were no Joneses for him to keep up with.
4. There were no credit cards or shopping centers.
5. He never had dinner interrupted by window salesmen.
6. He got away with wearing a simple wardrobe.
7. He never had to shovel snow!
8. If he had gone bald, who would have known that was not normal?
9. There was no “standard weight and height”—and the word “fat” meant “good.”

“A merry heart does good.”

PROVERBS 17:22



Seven Deadly Social Sins

WEALTH without WORK
 PLEASURE without CONSCIENCE
 EDUCATION without CHARACTER
 COMMERCE without MORALITY
 SCIENCE without HUMANITY
 POLITICS without PRINCIPLE

“Lord, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart.”

PSALM 15:1–2

For more material on the home and family, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, grandparents, and family finances, go to www.housetohouse.com.

Improving Your Credit Score

A spiritual person pays attention to material concerns (Proverbs 10:4).

Do you and your spouse need to borrow money for home improvements? Do you need a credit card with a low APR? A good FICO (credit score) is imperative to secure loans, low interest rates, and, in some cases, even reasonable car insurance premiums. Here are a few basic tips to improve your FICO score:

Pay on time. Pay the minimum required as soon as you get the bill, or set up an automatic payment through your bank.

Pay more. Even if you send only five dollars more than your minimum payment, you are still technically paying down your debt, which will be reflected on your credit history.

Lower your debt ratio. The total amount of debt on credit cards and revolving accounts divided by the total amount of credit available to you results in a fraction of less than one—your debt ratio. The lower the fraction the better. For instance, owing \$5,000 on a \$15,000 account puts you in better shape than to owe the same amount on a \$10,000 account.



Take time. The longer you have had a card, the higher your credit limit will be (which helps your debt ratio). That provides a solid credit history. So if you need to cancel a credit card, hang onto the one you have had the longest with the highest limit.

Limit inquiries. Each time a potential lender accesses your credit history, your FICO score takes a hit. To creditors it may indicate financial difficulties or that you are taking on more debt than you can pay back. —Anonymous

“He who has a slack hand becomes poor, but the hand of the diligent makes rich.”

PROVERBS 10:4

Just for Fun Matching Game

Match the reference to the picture:

- Luke 24:51
- Exodus 14:21–22
- Genesis 6–8
- Genesis 3
- John 19:25–27
- Matthew 21:1–11
- Luke 2:7
- John 19:17



What is Grace?

Grace, “God’s Riches at Christ’s Expense,” is His unmerited gift of salvation, and it is central to the gospel of Christ.

Justice calls for the punishment of all men because “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), and “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). But God, because of His love for mankind, chooses to be gracious and offer salvation to those who obey Him. Paul says, “By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9). Thus, salvation is by grace through faith.

The Greek word that New Testament writers chose to describe God’s unmerited favor is *charis*, which had as its root meaning “that which is beautiful, lovely, attractive, and charming.” It implies the idea of favor or special kindness shown to another. Graciousness is part of the beauty that should mark every Christian’s life. Paul said, “Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt,

that you may know how you ought to answer each one” (Colossians 4:6), and “Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers” (Ephesians 4:29).

Paul had a deepened sense of grace because he had changed from being a persecutor of the church to becoming a preacher of the gospel. “I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me” (1 Corinthians 15:9–10). As he faced imprisonment for his faith, he told the elders of the church at Ephesus, “But none of these things move me; nor do I

count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24).

Paul preached God’s grace because he understood that man was unable to earn God’s forgiveness by his own merit, since all men are sinners (Romans 3:23). Because of His gracious love, however, God acted and sent Christ to sacrifice Himself for mankind. “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).

The cross of Christ, the world’s greatest display of love and grace, appeals to the heart of the penitent sinner. Jesus said, “If I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself” (John 12:32). —Bob Prichard

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.



Bible Quiz

VOLUME 27:12

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark. We will grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark “The End Times” as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City/State: _____
 Phone: _____

Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

Answers to Previous Quizzes

V. 27:10 Starts with the Letter “P”: 1. Pardon (Psalm 25:11); 2. Parents (Romans 1:30); 3. Perseverance (2 Peter 1:6); 4. Peace (Galatians 5:22); 5. Persecution (2 Timothy 3:12); 6. Pharisees (Matthew 16:6); 7. Philistines (1 Samuel 17:4); 8. Phoebe (Romans 16:1–2); 9. Phylacteries (Matthew 23:5); 10. Physician (Colossians 4:14); 11. Pilate (Matthew 27:24); 12. Pillar (Genesis 19:26); 13. Pitch (Genesis 6:14); 14. Pithom (Exodus 1:11); 15. Pomegranates (Numbers 13:17–23); 16. Poor (Matthew 5:3); 17. Praise (Psalm 9:2); 18. Pray (1 Thessalonians 5:17); 19. Preach (2 Timothy 4:2); 20. Prepare (Amos 4:12); 21. Pride (Proverbs 16:18); 22. Pontus (Acts 18:1–3); 23. Priscilla (Acts 18:1–3); 24. Profit (Mark 8:36); 25. Purple (Acts 16:14).

V. 27:11 Starts with the Letter “H”: 1. Honor (Exodus 20:12); 2. Hadassah (Esther 2:7); 3. Ham (Genesis 9:22); 4. Husbands (John 4:18); 5. Honey (Matthew 3:4); 6. Hezekiah (Isaiah 38:5); 7. Hearers (James 1:22); 8. Humble (James 4:7); 9. Hophni (1 Samuel 4:11); 10. Herodias (Mark 6:19–20); 11. Herod (Matthew 2:16–18); 12. Hope (Titus 2:12); 13. Hell (Matthew 5:22); 14. Hate (1 John 4:20); 15. Heart (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22); 16. Hagar (Genesis 16:1, 15); 17. Heaven (Matthew 19:14); 18. (Hail (Exodus 9:22); 19. Horsemen (Revelation 6:1–8); 20. Heel (Genesis 3:15); 21. Hannah (1 Samuel 1:20); 22 Holy, holy, holy (Isaiah 6:3).

Starts with the Letter “W”

Directions: Find answers in the following passages: Genesis 49:9; Deuteronomy 8:18; Psalm 23:1; 30:5; 60:6–8; Proverbs 15:29; 16:28; Ezekiel 1:15–28; Isaiah 40:31; Matthew 28:1–6; Mark 14:38; John 14:6; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:23; 15:1; Galatians 6:9; James 1:27; 1 Peter 2:11; 1 John 1:7; Revelation 20:11; 22:17. Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

1. “The _____ of sin is death.”
2. “But those who _____ on the Lord shall renew their strength.”
3. “But if we _____ in the light . . . the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”
4. “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not _____.”
5. “Abstain from fleshly lusts which _____ against the soul.”
6. “And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and _____ away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”
7. Moab is described as God’s _____.
8. “_____ and pray, lest you enter into temptation.”
9. “Whoever desires, let him take the _____ of life freely.”
10. “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the _____, the truth, and the life.’”
11. “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the _____.”
12. Remember God, for He “gives you power to get _____.”
13. “And let us not grow _____ while doing good.”
14. Jesus rose on the first day of the _____.
15. “_____ may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning.”
16. Ezekiel saw a vision of a _____ within a _____.
17. “Judah is a lion’s _____.”
18. “A _____ separates the best of friends.”
19. God sits upon a great _____ throne.
20. “The Lord is far from the _____, but He hears the prayer of the righteous.”
21. “Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and _____ in their trouble.”

He was *wounded* for our transgressions

There are at least six varieties of wounds a person can suffer.

Abrasive wound: The skin is scraped off. This can result from stumbling, carrying a rough object, or receiving a glancing blow. “He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull” (John 19:17).

Contused wound: This kind of wound is caused by a heavy blow. “One of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand” (John 18:22).

Incised wound: A knife, spear, or other sharp instrument causes this kind of wound. “Pilate took Jesus, and scourged Him” (John 19:1).

Lacerated wound: The flesh is torn open, leaving jagged edges. “I gave My back to those who struck Me,

and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting” (Isaiah 50:6).

Penetrating wound: The flesh is pierced through. “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails” (John 20:25).

Puncture wound: A pointed or spiked instrument makes a puncture wound. “One of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear” (John 19:34).

Jesus suffered all these wounds. Yes, Jesus suffered real physical pain, but what Jesus suffered physically by itself does not give the power to the cross. Jesus also endured spiritual pain because He was made “to be sin for us” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

“He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”

ISAIAH 53:5

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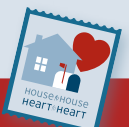


That Was a Great Sermon on Patience



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VOLUME 27:12



TYPES & ANTITYPES

JONAH as a type of CHRIST

God is amazing. No one else could put the shadow of future things into the past. Types and antitypes are examples of God prefiguring the future. Types are the shadows in the Old Testament of things that were to come (antitypes) in the New Testament.

The prophet Jonah is a type of Christ. Although Jonah foolishly ran from God, his work still is a reflection of the redemptive work of Christ. Jesus Himself pointed out this connection in Matthew 12:40.



JONAH TYPE	JESUS THE CHRIST ANTITYPE
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He was sent to call the Gentile Assyrians in Nineveh to salvation (JONAH 1:1-2; 3:1-2).

He was willing to sacrifice his life for his shipmates (JONAH 1:12).

After his sacrifice, he was placed in the belly of the fish (JONAH 2:1).

After three days, he was vomited out of the fish's mouth (JONAH 2:10).

After his recovery from the fish, he carried out his mission (JONAH 3:1-3).

Jonah preached that Nineveh would be destroyed in 40 days if they did not repent (JONAH 3:4).

Jonah's preaching brought about repentance and faithful obedience, which resulted in the salvation of Nineveh (JONAH 3:8-10).

Jesus was sent to call all men everywhere to salvation (MATTHEW 28:18-20).

Jesus was willing to sacrifice His life for the world (JOHN 1:29; 1 TIMOTHY 2:6).

After His sacrifice, Jesus was placed in a tomb (LUKE 23:53).

After three days Jesus was resurrected (LUKE 24:7, 46).

After His resurrection, Jesus carried out His mission in founding the church (MARK 16:16; ACTS 1-2).

After His resurrection, Jesus taught for 40 days before His ascension, and gave the apostles the mission to continue preaching (ACTS 1:3, 8).

People are saved through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus (1 CORINTHIANS 1:21; ROMANS 10:13-17; MARK 16:15-16).

I Was Just Thinking about You

President Harry Truman was famous for taking long walks. Those were simpler days when a president could take a walk like anyone else.

One evening while walking on the Memorial Bridge on the Potomac, Truman grew curious about the mechanism that raised the middle span of the bridge. Making his way across the catwalks and through the bridge's inner workings, he suddenly came upon the bridge tender, eating his supper out of a tin bucket.

The man showed no surprise when he looked up and saw the most powerful man in the world. He just swallowed his food, wiped his mouth, smiled, and said, "You know, Mr. President, I was just thinking of you." It was a greeting Truman never forgot.¹

If the Lord Jesus showed up at our workplace today, could we say, "You know, Lord, I was just thinking about You"? Where are our minds today? Every temptation comes through our thoughts (James 1:13-15). Satan wants to clutter our minds with trash. Keep your mind focused on Jesus.

Endnote:

¹ *Truman*, David McCullough, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992, p. 623

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus"

PHILIPPIANS 2:5





Palm Beach Lakes Church of Christ
4067 Leo Lane
Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33410



You Can Still Find the Church of the Bible

In 1942 when I was in Kansas City, someone stole my car. I had a new 1942 model Nash automobile. My car was gone! I did not know which way to turn. So I called the police. When they came, they began to ask questions. They asked, "What model is it? When was it made?"

Suppose I had said, "It doesn't make any difference when it was made; just get me a car. The model is immaterial." Suppose they had come back with an old 1914 model. I would have decided it made a difference, would I not? I suspect that if I had talked to those policemen like that, they would have said, "He is drunk; we had better lock him up."

Yet I can talk to people about the church and say, "It doesn't make any difference about the name or when it started; there's no difference in what it does," and people say I'm a scholar.

Yes, modern religion has destroyed every identification mark of the church, but you can find the church that Jesus built if you will go out and look for it in as sensible a manner as those police looked for my car.

—G. K. Wallace

*"You are Peter, and on this rock
I will build My church."*

MATTHEW 16:18



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0200 Palm Beach

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