

*Part 10*

*Faith Alive Through--*

**PRACTICING  
THE PRESENCE OF JESUS**

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A few years ago, when Detroit was being burned and riots plagued the city, a lone Policeman is credited with saving-the-day. It was an explosive situation downtown. Everyone was tense! One spark of a wrong word or false look could start a whole riot. The ring-leaders were spotted and watched. As they began to gather on a particular street corner, a policeman sauntered up to these men casually and said: **"If you men want to stand here, you'll have to move on."** The guys shook their heads as though to clear their ears. Again the Policeman looked directly into their faces and said, **"I say, if you want to stand here, you'll have to move on."** They laughed and went their separate ways. No one ever found out what caused the Policeman to use the particular awkward words that saved the day.

In the same vein, I remind myself that IF I WANT TO STAND WHERE I AM, I'LL HAVE TO MOVE ON! The great spiritual truths of God's Word we have been sharing in this book, can only remain a reality in our life as we practice-exercise-apply them moment by moment.

Spiritual power cannot be stored up for a rainy day, so-to-speak. Corrie Ten Boom was a person that experienced the power of God at work in and thru her life from the strange bottle of vitamin pills that never ran out as she shared them with the women prisoners in the ill-famed Ravensbruck Prison of Germany during World War II, and across the years as God led her around the world to tell people about Jesus. She was asked this question in later years. "Corrie, with all the miracles you tell about, I suppose you have faith stored up for years to come?" Corrie in her broken Dutch-English brogue replied instantly. **"NO SIR!, FOR EVERY NEW DAY IT TAKES A WHOLE NEW FAITH!"**

How very false is the assumption that reading, memorizing and studying the Bible brings victory. We Americans couple this with listening to lectures and lessons on tape, attending seminars and services and yet the quality or quantity of faith applied in American life does not increase. We lampoon the Athenians of ancient Greece of whom it was said:

For all the Athenians and the foreigners who were there spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing.(1)

I ask myself--"How far removed are American Christians from this mentality?" The only *real difference* is the subject matter. For there must always be a new truth via a new seminar, new sermon, new lesson, new workshop, new tape recording or film, add infinitum. The point is that neither the Athenians or Americans are intent upon APPLYING WHAT THEY HEAR. They are forever hearing some new thing that becomes a mental, spiritual wheel-spinning, clutch-slipping activity. Herein Paul's words to Timothy come to fulfillment:

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves...having a form of godliness but denying its power...always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.(2)

In response to this, one lukewarm church member said to me--"But, the Bible says 'And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.' "(3)

From this question I made a study of this verse and in particular the words--"know" as related to "truth."

The Greek word for "know" - *ginosko* - has a different meaning from our usual thought that it means truth stored in our mind.

W.E. Vine says of this word "know":

In the New Testament *ginosko* indicates a relation between the person knowing and the object known;...such knowledge is obtained, not by mere intellectual activity, but by operation of the Holy Spirit consequent upon acceptance of Christ. Nor is such knowledge marked by finality; e.g., II Peter 3:18.(4)

This same word in the verb form is used to describe the intimacy of marriage when the Scripture declares "Then Mary said to the angel, 'How can this be, since I do not KNOW a man?' " (Luke 1:34; Matthew 1:25)

So, our understanding of these words--know and truth, signifies a hearing of Truth and receiving it into our mind followed of necessity by application to life. When this is

accomplished we have reversed Paul's prophetic statement in that we **HAVE COME TO A KNOWLEDGE OF THE TRUTH.**

By the Grace of God, the Holy Spirit delivered me out of this deadly--*hear something new, do nothing about it--*syndrome. **JESUS** now became **real** in my life as I put into practice the simple truths that were as old as the Bible. This is what the Lord indicates when He said:

"The person who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who (really) loves Me, and whosoever (really) loves Me will be loved of My Father. And I (too) will love him and will show (reveal, manifest) Myself to Him--I will let Myself be clearly seen by him and make Myself real to him.

(John 14:21 - Amplified New Testament)(5)

Substituting Bible study, church attendance and other church busy work for **PRACTICING THE WORD OF GOD** is like two gas wells on our farm. I grew up with wood burning stoves and kerosene lamps. It was not until we moved to a farm near Cherryvale in southeast Kansas that I was introduced to natural gas. Our farm had two gas wells. One that provided fuel for heating, cooking and lights. The spare well simply sat there blowing out gas and salt water. Deciding to conserve this loss we installed some pipe and shut this well in. In due time when needed, it was dead. Later we were told we should have installed a "drip" on the well that allows the salt water to blow out while the gas is conserved. This is a parable of life for many church members. They kill God's Power by attempting to store up power.

It is **WHAT WE PRACTICE** that is a continuing source of power. This is the reason that James records those oft quoted words--"Faith without works is dead." Like many of you, I memorized the axioms and postulates of high school Geometry. I can still repeat four of them. Such as "if two things are equal to the same thing, they are equal to each other" and "the shortest distance between two points is a straight line." **WHY** do I know these and not all the others?

Because I have USED THEM in various ways across forty years. On a spiritual plane I have attended several of Bill Gothard's "Basic Youth Conflict Seminars." I have a BIG red notebook full of many, many truths. The only ones that have blessed me are the ones I EXERCISED in my daily living.

In the previous chapters I have shared how the Presence and Power of Jesus comes alive in life as we begin to walk and talk in faith thru being filled with His Spirit, living by faith, praying always, praising God in all things, lifting up Jesus' Name and listening for God's Voices to direct us. This chapter is a simple sharing of how we can c-o-n-t-i-n-u-e to keep our faith alive by--*practicing the Presence of Jesus*.

"A whole is equal to the sum of its parts" is another of the axioms of Geometry I learned. This is also a spiritual axiom in that a life is equal to the sum of its parts. Jesus' home in Nazareth must have been a perfect example of what life in a home ought to be. Thus, Luke 2:42-52 records the story of Jesus at age 12 going with Mary and Joseph to the temple to celebrate the Passover Feast. He stayed behind asking and answering questions of the Teachers of the Law. The conclusion reads as follows:

*"And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." Luke 2:51,52*

Jesus' four-fold increase was complete. I suggest that his home had much to do with His development and further that our homes-families are an excellent place for practicing the Presence of Jesus. I consider our home to be a spiritual gymnasium. Thus, in conferences, camps, seminars, conventions and church assemblies we receive instructions from the Bible teaching coaches. In the "gym of our home" we put this knowledge into practice. Using the four statements concerning Jesus--*wisdom, stature, favor with God and man*--let us

realize THE PRESENCE OF JESUS in our hearts thru PRACTICE IN OUR HOMES.

I WILL PRACTICE THE PRESENCE OF JESUS BY BEING--

**#“in favor with God.” Luke 2:52**

Using a thought picture of building a house, this statement-“in favor with God”-makes an excellent FOUNDATION.

To establish and maintain this “in favor with God” foundation in my life, I suggest Job’s example.

**Sanctify self, even as Job did--**

“There lived in the land of Uz a man named Job--a good man who feared God and stayed away from evil. He had a large family of seven sons and three daughters, and was immensely wealthy, for he owned 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 teams of oxen, 500 female donkeys, and employed many servants. He was, in fact, the richest cattleman in the entire area.

Every year when each of Job’s sons had a birthday, he invited his brothers and sisters to his home for a celebration. On these occasions they would eat and drink with great merriment. When these birthday parties ended--and sometimes they lasted several days--Job would summon his children to him and sanctify them, getting up early in the morning and offering a burnt offering for each of them. For Job said, “Perhaps my sons have sinned and turned away from God in their hearts.” This was Job’s regular practice.”(6)

Every day self must be dedicated to God even as it says “this was Job’s daily practice.” This concept of PRESENTING SELF to God and GOD TO OTHERS is called “The Priesthood of Parents” by Larry Christenson:

“Writing to Christians in general, St. Peter says, ‘You are a royal *priesthood*...’ (I Peter 2:9). This was one of the doctrines recovered by Martin Luther during the Reformation, ‘the priesthood of all believers.’ Protestants have usually emphasized the fact that this gives every believer personal access to God, without any intermediary; a person may act as his own priest.

This is true enough, as far as it goes. The tradition of the priesthood provides for a ministry of the priest to himself (See Leviticus 9:7). But both in the Old Testament type, and in the

New Testament application, the primary emphasis is upon the priesthood's ministry to others. Whatever ministry a priest does on his own behalf is a preparation for his ministry to others. We are called into the priesthood of all believers not merely that we might have our own private line to God, but in order to 'declare the wonderful deeds of him who called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.' (I Peter 2:9)—in other words, to minister God's grace to others.....

What a field of service the Christian home affords for this privileged ministry. Parents--priests of the Lord! Called and ordained by God as priests unto their children."(7)

Every morning before I get out of bed, I take prayer time to--\*

\*Resist the devil in Jesus' Name in behalf of my family--Imalee, Lisa, Teresa, Rebecca, Galen, Kim, Elizabeth and myself.

\*Ask God to fill each of us with His Holy Spirit.

\*Request Angelic assignments for each of us through the day.

I pass these blessings on to my family through a family altar. For some thirty years, Imalee and I and our children have set aside a time each day to read a chapter from God's Word and join hands and hearts to pray. In earlier years we had our family altar just before the kids left for school. Now, that they are grown, our appointed hour is immediately following the 10 p.m. news.

A home without a family altar is like a ship without a rudder. The late J. Edgar Hoover spoke of the prime importance of a family altar in a radio broadcast.

The memory of those mornings at home kept me going straight.

If there is hope for the future of America, if there is to be peace and happiness in our homes, then we as a nation must return to God and the practice of daily prayer. Can we have eternal peace without morality, can we build homes without God, or have worthy parents who do not know and practice His teachings? Our nation is sadly in need of...a return to the days when God was part of each household...My hope for the future nation is predicated upon the faith of God which is nurtured in the family.

Family worship will help to cure the religious ignorance in our day, the weakness of many churches, and the growing secularization of modern society.

How influential in the life of a child are these daily times of worship?

When I was chaplain in an Arkansas penitentiary, out of seventeen hundred convicts, I found only one who had been brought up in a home where they had an old-fashioned family altar. I heard since that he was pardoned as he was found innocent of the crime with which he was charged. There is an atmosphere in the Christian home which makes it impossible for skepticism or atheism to live there.(8)

In recent years when the Supreme Court made its ill-famed ruling about prayer and Bible reading in the public schools of America, a concerned parent said to me--"If they don't get prayer and Bible reading in school where are they going to get it during the week?" My answer, "In the home around the family altar." The Court ruling caused quite a stir in the whole country, unduly I perceived. My conclusion may seem unwise. But after the Court ruling, I began to make a survey among church people I met in the Revivals across the country. My survey was conducted at dinner tables where I was a guest during a Revival and sometimes on the night I preached on the "Home-family altar", I would ask a whole congregation to raise their hands according to the following three questions:

#1. "When you attended public school did you have prayer and Bible reading in the classroom?"

Less than 10% said "Yes."

#2. "When you attended school did you have prayer or Bible reading in your class?"

Only 20 to 25% said "Yes."

#3. "When you attended school did you recite the pledge to the flag in your classroom?"

The collective answer: 90 to 95% said "Yes."

Here are three factors you will be interested in about this simple survey of the last 15 years.

1. The answers from the central Bible belt of the U.S.A. were always higher. The East and West coasts, always lower.



2. The people who gave the answers covered almost a whole century of school attendance from 1900 to 1988.
3. Regretfully, these answers are what I had surmised from my observation across many years. One must return to the previous century and primarily to the seventeen hundreds to find anything like universal prayer and Bible reading in our public schools.

Israel of the Old Testament taught their children God's Word in their homes. Thus, the words from Moses:

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you to-day shall be in your heart; you shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up."(9)

Do we suppose that the church, which is "spiritual Israel," can accomplish transference of the Word in some other way?

Exciting it was while visiting our son and family-Galen, Kim and Elizabeth-in Georgia to participate in "Follow The Leader." It takes place every evening as the sun is setting when everyone-family, friends and house guests--gather 'round for the reading of a Bible story from a pictorial New Testament. This is followed by our granddaughter, Elizabeth, selecting a song--Scripture chorus, hymn or praise song. At this point everyone stands and begins to sing as the group FOLLOWS THE LEADER, Elizabeth, into her bedroom. Here she calls on the group one-by-one to pray--some sit, daddy kneels, some stand. This is followed by honey-time--hugs and kisses--all around.

Let us PRACTICE THE PRESENCE OF JESUS - *be in favor with God* - by BUILDING our hearts upon a FOUNDATION of God's Word and prayer.

May it be as a wise man once said:

BY SEEKING GOD'S WORD, WE GIVE OURSELVES TWO THINGS--ROOTS AND WINGS!(10)

We can build a hedge of protection around our home by confessing the Truth of God's Word over it.

My Christian brother and sister, Keith and Linda Dellenbach, now ministering at Sawyer, Kansas, say-speak-confess God's Word every day over their children, Charity and Josh.

Keith and I have worked together on many facets of the Kingdom since our first Revival together at Greensburg, Kansas in 1975. When our water pipes froze and burst in 1982, Bro. Keith was our repair plumber. Last Spring Keith came to install our kitchen cabinets and appliances. How exciting to begin a plumbing or carpentry project with PRAYER and to walk down the street to the hardware store with Keith while he confesses the following truths for his family:

Our children shall love the Lord our God with all their heart, soul, strength and mind, (Luke 10:27) and shall have no other gods before Him (Exodus 20:3). The Holy Spirit, who is upon us, and God's Words in our mouths shall not depart from us or our children or their children from now and forever (Isaiah 59:21).

Our children will be recognized as the children whom the Lord has blessed (Isaiah 61:9). They are disciples, taught of the Lord and obedient to His will and great is their peace and undisturbed composure (Isaiah 54:13-Amplified). The Holy Spirit is poured out on our children (Isaiah 44:3-5). They will grow in wisdom, stature, and favor with God and man (Luke 2:40,52). Like trees by streams of water (Psalm 1; Isaiah 44) they shall be oaks of righteousness (Isaiah 61:3), like olive plants around our table (Psalm 128:3). They will confess "I am the Lord's" (Isaiah 44:5). They have the heart in them to love and fear the Lord and keep His ways always; and it will be well with them and their children forever (Deuteronomy 5:29).

The Lord is their Shepherd, they shall not want. He leads them in paths of righteousness. They fear no evil. Goodness and mercy shall follow them all their life, and they will dwell in God's house forever (Psalm 23). The Lord is their keeper. He protects them from all evil and keeps their soul (Psalm 121:7).

Our children listen to their Father and follow Him in all they do. His blessings shall come upon them and overtake them. They are blessed in the city and the country, in the offspring of their bodies, of their ground and of their herds and flocks. They are blessed with abundance of food (never to beg for bread Psalm 37:25). In their cupboards is abundance. They are bless-

ed when they come in and go out, before their enemies and in everything they put their hand to. God makes them abound in prosperity. He opens His storehouse to them. They lend, but do not borrow. They are above and not beneath; the head and not the tail, and serve their God diligently (Deuteronomy 28:1-14).

Our children will know and receive the truth and the truth shall make them free (John 8:32). Christ will dwell in their hearts through faith and they being rooted and grounded in love will comprehend the length, height and depth of God's love and know the love of Christ that passes all knowledge. They will be filled up with the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:17-19).

Now the peace of God Himself sanctifies them entirely so that their spirit, soul and body may be kept blameless and complete until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (I Thessalonians 5:23). Our God will watch over our children, working both His will and to do His good pleasure in them and bring to completion the work He has begun (Philippians 2:3; 1:6).

The One who has called us to learn and do His will is faithful and He will do a work of glory in us and our children (I Thessalonians 5:24).

**I WILL PRACTICE THE PRESENCE OF JESUS by--**

**#Increasing in stature.--Luke 2:52**

Continuing the thought picture of PRACTICING THE PRESENCE OF JESUS to building a house, the statement--"Increased in stature,"--Makes two great side walls for the building.

Paul tells Timothy:

"...bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things...." (I Timothy 4:8)

There is little need in America to remind us to eat three nutritional meals a day and brush our teeth regularly. However, it is good to be conscious that our body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. (I Corinthians 3:16)

Rather, in PRACTICING THE PRESENCE OF JESUS, let us give spiritual meaning to physical matters including our body.

In the book "The Christian Family," Larry Christenson shares a first person story, how matters on a physical plane can be transformed to higher ground.

"Without experience, faith becomes cold, dead, formal, legalistic. We must not only teach our children to believe that God is, but also go the second step which the Bible calls for, and help them experience that 'He rewards those who seek Him'. (Hebrews 11:6)

This will have an immediate effect on the way we pray with our children. It will lead us beyond the 'God bless *Mommy and Daddy...*' bedtime offering...prayers into real prayers of *faith*, prayers that ask for and expect a definite answer.

Our youngest son once lost an honor pin which he had won at school. He was supposed to wear it on his tie, and to have lost it was looked on as a great disgrace. We ransacked his room looking for the pin, but couldn't find it anywhere. So, in our morning prayers, he prayed that he would be able to find his honor pin. Two days later, when I came home for supper, he met me at the door all abeam: 'We found my honor pin--*just like I prayed!*' A dozen sober and theologically correct pronouncements could never have conveyed so convincingly the love of God to that six-year old boy as that one simple answer to prayer."(11)

### **Exercise! Exercise! Exercise!**

*"Exercise yourself rather to godliness."* (I Timothy 4:7)

I don't believe we become all that God wants us to be in a moment of time; but, we become God-like through spiritual EXERCISE. In theology this is called "Progressive Sanctification."

Spiritual gym equipment that provides opportunity for daily exercise includes--\*Bible reading..\*Whetting the appetite..\*Walking by faith..\*Loving..\*Praying..\*Dealing With the Devil..\*Witnessing..\*Praising The Lord.

In our home we seek to PRACTICE THE PRESENCE OF JESUS by exercising spiritual truths. While it is true that our children and ourselves were different in chronological ages; yet, in Jesus, we all grew up together.

### **EXERCISE Whetting the APPETITE.**

Jesus said:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled." (Matthew 5:6)

I always tell folk that I am hard to please when it comes to

food. I only like two kinds of pie--hot and cold. Any kind of food will do, but not spoiled food. I like cabbage slaw but not spoiled cabbage---kraut. You see, my appetite dictates what I eat. Life is like that. Our appetites determine what we devote our life to. As parents we have much to do with our children's appetites. Our children participated in school events. Lynn played in the band, Teresa played basketball and debated, Galen played basketball and was a track runner, Rebecca was in drama and music. They also were active in church youth rallies, area 5th Sunday conventions, youth camps, on campus Bible College days, local youth groups, Sunday School, Revivals, Daily Vacation Bible School, Church assemblies, and prayer meetings. Imalee and I never drove through any ice, snow or high winds to attend out-of-town school events. Appetite dictated that we drive through storms to get to various church events. So without saying a word we passed on to our children our evaluation of that which is of lasting importance by what we did.

I have always had a personal rule to judge all things by--  
**WHAT DIFFERENCE WILL IT MAKE A HUNDRED YEARS FROM NOW?** If the event can pass that test, that it pointed me towards God and played an important part in building character, then it is **IMPORTANT!** I know many ball fans that cannot tell me who played in the Orange Bowl two years ago much less the scores. A bit of poetry says it all.

Only one life.

It will soon be past.

Only what's done for Christ will last!

Paul spoke the solution to appetites when he said.

This I say: "Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (Galatians 5:16)

### **EXERCISE living by FAITH.**

The Scripture God used to open the eyes of Martin Luther was one phrase out of Romans 1:17:

"The just shall live by faith." (12)

As I shared previously, *living by FAITH* is meant to be the

norm for all Christians. And, like all the graces of God, FAITH must be taught. When we decided to go God's Way in **all** of life's activities, there were numerous opportunities to EXERCISE WALKING BY FAITH. The following story is one of those examples.

For many years we had taken our family on a very inexpensive (\$100 or less) vacation up in the Rocky Mountain National Park near Estes Park, Colorado. Some of our fondest memories as a family have been our summer camping in the Rockies. After sharing in a Sunday Service at the Campground, we would seek out a beautiful mountain stream where Lynn, Teresa, Rebecca, Galen, Lisa, Imalee and I would sit down to sing the Songs of Zion, join hands together in a circle of prayer and Break the Bread of communion.

Year by year we increased our expertise in selecting a campsite, building a campfire, and setting up a tent. S-e-l-f was well entrenched and did not want outside interference.

SELF had taught me the formula for getting a good camping spot: Leave after the Sunday evening church service, drive all night, and when the sun came up on Monday morning we would be pulling into Rocky Mountain National Park. It worked every time. So, when it came to August of 1971 and one more trip--why should we PRAY? I knew the way.

But our hearts were heavy since our firstborn son, Lynn, had gone to be with Jesus just a month prior a-n-d we were leaving at the wrong time of day.

Tired, we elected to leave early Monday morning. Joining hands together to pray for the trip, I prayed, "Lord, we are tired and leaving late, please reserve us a campsite." SELF died when we reached the National Park in late afternoon. Signs were out at the entrance--"Sorry Folks, Campground Is Full." The Ranger said, "I can't stop you from driving in." So, we purchased our "Golden Eagle Pass" and drove down to Glacier Basin Campground on the Bear Lake Road. A big FULL sign greeted us again. This campground has four loops--201 campsites in all. We drove Loop A and B, with all

sites taken. When we came to C-130, it appeared to be vacant. We left our middle daughter, Rebecca, to sit on the picnic table as a sort of down-payment to claim the spot if it should happen to be unclaimed, then drove the rest of C and D. Only one spot, maybe? Back at the Office, the Ranger said "Yes, the campground is full." When we inquired in particular about C-130, he jumped on his three-wheel cycle and was back in a moment. "It's O-P-E-N! The folk left this morning and won't be back." The pure mountain air at 7,500 feet elevation often produces goose bumps, but these goose bumps were on the inside of me. God did know something about campsites. He had answered our prayer. We were learning to let go of self and walk by faith by praying together. We hiked the trails and climbed the mountains but this exercise in trusting the Lord was even better than ascending the Continental Divide and climbing over Storm Mountain Pass.

In living by faith, we taught ourselves and thus by example our children, that God knows how to direct the buying of cars, providing gas, bless highway travel, heal bodies and supply our daily needs. I repeat here that simple formula for an "ACT OF FAITH."

1. Willfully commit any act to God in prayer.
2. Lean not on our own understanding to make it happen.
3. Look to and wait on God for the answer.

*"Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
And lean not on your own understanding;  
In all your ways acknowledge Him,  
And He shall direct your paths."*

*(Proverbs 3:5,6)*

### **EXERCISE the Lordship of Jesus--PRAISE HIM!**

Paul taught us with these words:

"Rejoice always; pray without ceasing;  
in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God  
in Christ Jesus for you." (I Thessalonians 5:16-18)

GIVING THANKS IN ALL THINGS is both a tool and a test of the Lordship of Jesus in our living. It is a tool in that PRAISING THE LORD for the events of life makes Jesus Lord over

each matter. It is a test in that if we recognize Jesus as Lord in each event, there will be no problem in praising Him for all things.

I shared extensively about praise in chapter 6. The subject came alive even more as our children began to thank God in all things.

Our oldest daughter, Teresa, began her pre-med studies at Emporia (Kansas) State College in 1973. The Lord supplied her needs, which did not include a car for many years.

During her Freshman year, she called home to say someone had stolen her bicycle.

I inquired: "Are you praising the Lord for this?"

She replied: "I hardly think so. I see nothing in it to praise the Lord about."

"Don't look for reasons," I encouraged her, "just give thanks as the Scripture says."

She went out and purchased another bicycle and parked it under the stairwell in the dormitory.

The next year she called home and announced: "My bicycle has been stolen."

"PRAISE THE LORD!" I encouraged.

"I'd like to, but?....Maybe I'll try."

She purchased bicycle #3 along with a heavy cable and lock. She graduated in 1977 and moved on to the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City.

That fall she called home to say someone had stolen her bicycle. The Police said it was probably taken by a gang of thieves out of St. Louis that move thru cities with vans, bolt cutters with three foot long handles, etc. They take the stolen bicycles to another city and sell them for a profit. Down at the Police Station they took the bicycle I.D. marks and indicated it was highly unlikely that she would ever see the bicycle again.

I inquired: "Are you PRAISING THE LORD?"

"Yes!" she said, "I am!"

In a few days the Police called to say--"Come down to the



Station and see if this is your bicycle.” She did and it was! PRAISE paved the way for God to work.

Now a physician practicing General Surgery in Winfield, Kansas, this lesson still lingers to remind that GOD WORKS when WE MAKE HIM LORD through PRAISE.

### **EXERCISE dealing With The devil.**

James encourages us in our spiritual EXERCISE with these words.

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. (James 4:7)

While learning the three-fold Bible principle of dealing with the devil, that in prayer we--\*

- \*1. Come against the devil-demons-evil spirits with a command for them to depart in JESUS' NAME. (Matthew 16:23; Acts 16:18)
- \*2. Confront the evil forces with Scripture just as Jesus did. (Matthew 4:4,7,10)
- \*3. Plead the Blood of Jesus to cover and keep you as the early Christians did. (Revelation 12:11)

While learning this in my own life, I began to exercise dealing with the devil in others. I shared previously about our youngest daughter, Lisa, and her emotional handicap. One of her problems in early years was screaming and biting the back of her hand until it looked like hamburger. At first tranquilizers, and nerve pills had a temporary calming effect along with restraining her hands in a physical way. In due time the effect of the medication ceased. We learned two things when these attacks came upon her.

#1--Come against the enemy (devil-demons-evil spirits) with a command of words for him to depart in JESUS' NAME.

#2--Sing the song, "Jesus Loves Me" in a personalized way to Lisa.

This was the best medicine by far and the effects did not wear out. After exercising God's Power against the enemy many times, he got the message and left her alone. It has now been many years since an attack.

I sum up the importance of giving spiritual meaning to "increasing in stature" in these lines of poetry the Lord blessed me with.

Four things a Christian can do to have victory true;  
Talk with Jesus in prayer moment by moment thru the day;  
Invite His Holy Spirit to fill us as we travel that Narrow Way;  
Resist the devil by the Blessed Name we say;  
Be filled with joy by praising Him in all things along the Way.

I WILL PRACTICE The PRESENCE OF JESUS by--

**#3 - Increasing in wisdom.--Luke 2:52**

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. (Luke 2:52)

Continuing the thought picture of PRACTICING THE PRESENCE OF JESUS to building a house, the statement--"increased in wisdom,"--makes two more great side walls for the building.

Solomon names the beginning place of WISDOM when he says:

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. (Proverbs 9:10)

"Fear" as used in this verse by Solomon does not mean to cower or walk around afraid but a worshipful respect for God and His Word. It is the Spirit given ability to weigh the true nature of matters and apply knowledge to vexing problems.

This being true, Jesus *increased* in wisdom by applying knowledge (facts, truths) to the challenge of life.

As we practice fear (worshipful, obedient respect) for the Lord, even so, we pass on to those around us this same wisdom.

My dad was not a religious zealot, however, he was a member of the Baptist church in Medicine Lodge, Kansas. I learned great lessons of wisdom from his unspoken attitude lived out in life. Those lessons include--\*

\*Don't work on Sunday.

Wheat harvest was a BIG TEST. Our harvest with a tractor-

pulled combine lasted for two to three weeks as we cut some 500 acres. Always there was the question: "You're not going to cut wheat on Sunday, are you?" The answer: "Yep, we sure are for it might rain, hail or blow and ruin the crop." To produce more wheat for the War effort we purchased a new John Deere combine in 1944 and started to cut wheat on Sunday. This combine was driven by high speed chains. One of those chains slipped from the sprocket wheel and got caught with some more chains. It shut the Sunday cutting down for the day and we had to call a welder out from Hardtner, Kansas to make repairs besides ordering certain parts. It was Wednesday before we got back in the field. That was the last time we harvested on Sunday. I heard Dad say while making those repairs--"Maybe God is trying to tell me something about working on Sunday." That was a lesson in wisdom that I will remember forever.

### **\*Be honest!**

On November 23, 1945, my Mother and Sisters, Patsy and Janet and I were on our way to see the eye doctor in Alva, Oklahoma. Going south out of Hardtner, Kansas we met a large fruit truck on a one and one-half lane long river bridge. Attempting to miss the truck, my Mother drove ultra close to the huge steel beams on the right side. The truck sideswiped our car pushing it into the steel beams. The car was ruined and I spent a night in the hospital with a slight concussion plus losing eight front teeth. My estimate is that our loss equaled about eight hundred dollars. In due time we had an appointment in Enid, Oklahoma with the Insurance adjustor for the Trucking Company. Here I learned an indelible lesson in the wisdom of fairness and honesty. The adjustor offered my Dad two thousand dollars. He replied:

"No! That is more than our expense."

"How about fifteen hundred?" the adjustor countered.

Dad said: "No, that is too much considering the cost of the car, and the hospital and dental bills."

The adjustor now took advantage of an ultra honest man and said--"How about nothing?"

Dad responded with these words--"If that is your final offer then we have no choice but to say thank you and go home."

It was and we went home with a satisfied mind.

### **\*Be patient in suffering.**

The Bible has much, much to say about suffering patiently under adversity and distress.

"Love suffers long and is kind." (I Corinthians 13:4)

"patient in tribulation." (Romans 12:12b)

"If we endure, we shall also reign with him." (II Timothy 2:12)

My Dad left me a life-long lesson of wisdom in suffering patiently even though--#

#His lungs were damaged by poison-gas while serving in France during World War I. This produced breathing problems and finally emphysema. The Army denied him a disability pension, yet, through all the remaining 58 years he suffered quietly.

#While others were constantly complaining, harping, and criticizing; my Dad reacted with patient suffering.

### **\*Work hard!**

"Whatever your hands find to do, do it with your might."  
(Ecclesiastes 9:10)

There is a WISDOM in WORK that is often missed in our generation. Well-meaning parents determine their children must not pass through the same challenges and obstacles that they did. This unfortunately often includes w-o-r-k to earn funds to go to college, buy a car, etc. WORK is God ordained and helps to build character into the fiber of our being.

I share a poem that illustrates the wisdom of work in my Dad's life.

I was at the Christian Church in Stronghurst, Illinois preaching a Faith Alive Revival with Gene and Sharon Moorehouse when the news came that Dad had taken his final journey at the end of eighty four years. I finished the Revival and Sunday night, as I drove the miles home to Cherryvale, Kansas, memory expressed itself in lines of poetry that speak about the legacy of WISDOM that my Father left me. Here is that poem that our Minister for the memorial service, Leon Weece of Fort Scott, Kansas, read:

I remember Dad in the Springtime:  
With fences to mend and boys to bend  
It seemed like his task would never end.  
I remember Dad thru Depression fears and  
Dust Bowl Days and War time years.  
I was just a lad but I remember Dad in the  
Springtime years.

I remember Dad in the Summertime:  
His presence then was hardly seen  
For the yellow wheat that was bending low  
Must be reaped to become our winter clothes.  
He labored hard from dawn to dusk for all of us.  
With barely time for a movie or two  
And maybe a day at the Hardtner Fair.  
These were the days of Summertime  
When our hearts were light and cares were few  
There on the Home Place nestled in the Gyp Hills  
It seemed like We'd never finish the Race.  
I was just a youth but I remember Dad thru  
Summer years.

I remember Dad in the Fall:  
With wheat to drill and a silo to fill  
He gave his hands with a ready will.  
Yes, I remember well the years of Fall--  
One by one we left the nest, to wing our  
way to another day,  
To test our wings and soar high to do  
our best.  
Just a youth, yet, I remember Dad in the  
Fall years.

I remember Dad in the golden Winter Years:  
Up at five to milk the cows,  
Thru falling rain and blowing snow to feed  
the stock he went.

With noses pressed against the frosty  
window pane,  
we waited for the gleam of lantern light to  
signal Dad was coming up the hill and  
Christmas Day had begun.

Golden days of retirement years pass by.  
At last Curtains fall with bugle taps and  
roll call.

But that's not all:  
For as the years shall come and go  
I still remember Dad.  
He never set the world on fire  
But struck a match and lit a candle in the  
night,  
To show us what was good and right.  
That's the way I remember Dad.(13)

All of us need to have a will. Most of us do not have a million dollars to leave; but as stewards of God we ought to make arrangements for our earthly treasure after we are gone.

I drew up my first will when I was twenty eight years old and Jim Williams, Attorney at Dodge City, Kansas, drew up my final will in 1975. However, by far THE GREATEST LEGACY that I have for my children has already been given in MY WILL OF WISDOM in that--\*

\*I led them to know Jesus.

\*How to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

\*To seek the Lord with spiritual appetites.

\*How to confront the events of life with faith.

\*To talk with God in simple conversation: to pray

\*Praise the Lord in all things.

\*Deal with the devil in Jesus' Name.

\*And, let the light of their lives shine brightly for God!

I WILL PRACTICE The PRESENCE OF JESUS by--

**#4 - Being in Favor with Man.--Luke 2:52**

And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men. (Luke 2:52)

Concluding the thought picture of building a house, this statement--"**In favor with men.**"-- makes a fine roof for the building. It would make a shaky foundation and far too many individuals and families use it to build on. They start out wanting a BIG house, an expensive car, children that are social climbers and all the other things that money will buy. They end up personally and collectively with a life or family that is not in favor with either God or man.

Marshall Leggett said it this way:

It is an enigma that modern Western man, who is experiencing an unprecedented era of prosperity, should be characterized by emptiness. But Dr. Karl Jung, successor to Freud in many areas of psychiatry, was asked to diagnose the great spiritual illness of our age. He replied, "The central neurosis of our age is emptiness," This is what T.S. Elliot referred to when he called

our contemporaries "hollow men." He says that lives are empty and hollow; nothing fills the void in their hearts.

Young people sense this. They call it hypocrisy. They see the father who preaches to them about smoking marijuana, drinking a cocktail. Or, the mother who lectures a daughter on chastity, cheating on her husband. This is no doubt exaggerated. Not all adults imbibe and indulge in extra-marital relationships. It is the opinion of this writer these Christian adults are the "salt of the earth." And if you take them out of American society, it would probably collapse. But the spiritual emptiness of most of our age is obvious.

People need values on which to build; they need ideals for which to strive, and character with which to structure their lives. As one man said, "You must be yourself PLUS -- plus that in which you believe; plus that for which you stand; plus that to which you are willing to dedicate your life." For it is not a matter of who you are, or what you are. It is a matter of whose you are.(14)

The person who PRACTICES THE PRESENCE OF JESUS, starts out seeking to be in favor with God, increases in wisdom, learns to use the physical side of life for God's glory: the end result will be a heart and a home that is--in favor with man.

A member of the congregation where I preached over-emphasized the matter of BEING IN FAVOR WITH MAN. In 1958, while ministering at the West Lebanon (Indiana) Christian Church, I announced a series of four sermons on "Stewardship." On Monday after preaching the first message, one of the Elders, Fred Bonebrake, came to my study inquiring if he had understood me correctly about preaching on money for four Sundays straight. I assured him that was the plan and that the subject was "Stewardship." Teaching about money would be included along with time and talent. He reminded me that we had a rich man in the church who might be offended by so much preaching on this subject. The question was--Should I bow to the FAVOR OF MAN? I continued the planned course and the rich deacon came every Sunday. The main thrust of the sermons was that we can send our earthly treasures on ahead into eternity IF we invest it in eternal matters of the Kingdom of God here on earth.

On December 23, 1960, I preached the memorial service for this rich brother--Ura Seeger. His will was probated shortly after this. It was then that I learned of his changing his will. Prior to 1959, his will had left the bulk of his estate to various individuals. On November 6, 1959, his new will left his million dollar estate to various Christian institutions--Milligan College, Johnson Bible College, scholarships for those students who graduated as members of his Sunday School Class--The Loyal Sons and Daughters, and many more along with the church building fund.

It was wise to yield to the FAVOR OF GOD over BEING IN FAVOR WITH MAN.

In our seeking to practice the Presence of Jesus in our home by being in FAVOR WITH MAN, we placed BEING IN FAVOR WITH GOD at the top of the list. Imalee and I never had a long list of "Thou shalt nots." We sought to avoid the error of sin and follow the Truth of God's Word, which is more than a full time job. There were four negative factors for our children which were taboo. I called them the four D's.

1. No drinking of alcohol.

I saw early on in my teenage years that every kind of confusion and evil comes from drinking.

2. No experimenting with dope.

3. No early dating.

Dating is for mating. The reason I was counselling eighth grade girls that "had" to get married was because they started dating when they were fifth graders.

4. No dancing.

Play games, have fun but NO dancing. I learned early on that what the boys talk about on their side of the gym at a dance would make an elephant blush.

Some may say, "With a list like that people will be 'wall flowers.' They can't be in FAVOR WITH MAN, be popular!"

Paul gives Timothy and us the formula for being in "favor with man."

Let no man despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.  
(I Timothy 4:12)



And, still it is true that the really popular people are the ones who take a stand for the right!

EXAMPLE: When our oldest daughter, Teresa, was a Senior in High School, she was elected "Sweetheart Queen". Her convictions would not allow her to dance. She reigned over the banquet and the program; but when the lights were turned down low and the dance started, she slipped out and came home.

EXAMPLE: Our oldest son Lynn, planned far in advance to attend a Kiamichi Mountain Men-Boys church Clinic in Oklahoma. Two days before he was to leave, the band instructor, scheduled the band to appear at a neighboring town. Lynn said: "I won't be able to march with the band, I have another engagement." The Instructor said: "Don't you know that others come before self?" Lynn responded, "Sir, with me God comes 1st., Others 2nd., Self-last. I'll be down in Oklahoma learning how to make my life count more for Christ!" And, he was!

A lawyer left home to go to college and law school. Finally he hangs up his shingle to practice law in Louisville, Kentucky.

He came to his office one day announcing that he would be away. His secretary was to cancel all appointments until he returned. There was no forwarding address or telephone number.

He drove down the free-way, got off on a state highway which led to a county dirt road and finally a little tree lined lane. He stops in front of an old white frame house.

A little white-haired lady, bent with the years, comes down the path, peers through the slats on the gate and says: "Big John is that you? What are you doing home? It isn't Christmas or Mother's Day or the Fourth of July."

Big John gets out of his car and says: "Mother, I bring you sad news. I've lost God somewhere along the way."

"Well son, that's terrible; but, why have you come back here?"

"I want us to do the things we used to do when I was a boy."

His mother said, "Well yes, I guess. What do you mean?"

"Could we pray at mealtime like we used to? Read a chapter from the Bible at bedtime and say night prayers like we used to? And, start the day with prayers just like we used to many years ago?" "Sure, we can son! Anything to help you."

And, that is the way it was.

At suppertime it was the old familiar prayer:

For all we eat. For all we wear. For all we have  
everywhere. We thank Thee Father, A-men.

When the sun had set and a cool breeze was blowing through the trees, Big John said--"Mama, it's time for bed. You haven't forgotten how it used to be have you?"

"Of course not, Big John!" His mother said. "You get upstairs get your pajamas on and I'll bring the family Bible up."

Up the stairs she came and laid the Bible on the bed. They knelt together and read a chapter from the Psalms. Mama tucked Big John in one more time and listened as he prayed:

"Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord my soul to take. Bless Mama and Uncle Fred and Aunt Mary and Brother Bill and....."

A week later, Big John came bounding down the stairs with a smile from ear to ear, shouting as he came. "Mother! Mother! Good news! I've found God again!"

"Wonderful! Wonderful!" she said, "But, how did you do it?"  
"Just by doing the things we used to do. The things the years had caused me to forget to do."

Just so, Jesus becomes real and genuine to us as we exercise doing godly things. Thus, we increase in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man when we remember to do His things.

I started this chapter by quoting the Detroit Policeman "IF YOU WANT TO STAND HERE, YOU'LL HAVE TO MOVE ON"--even so, if we want to continue to stand in the midst of life, we must move on by--\*

\*Dying to self to begin again in order to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

\*Determine to make the events of life acts of faith by praying about everything.

\*Make Jesus Lord by praising Him in all things.

\*Lifting up Jesus' Name in word and deed while we listen for the voice of God all about us.

\*Moving life's mountains by speaking the truth of God's Word to them.

\*And exercising ourselves unto Godliness as we onward go.

## **KEEP FAITH ALIVE!**

Seek the Lord, not your own understanding.

Quit your fretful, prideful demanding.

Leaning on the Lord. He is ever strong.

You are His child. With Him you belong.

Nurture and strength and comfort you need?

He can abundantly impart. He is the seed!

According to your faith, He will supply,

If on Him you will continually rely.

Have the devil's enticements caused your faith to be weak?

Rebuke the devil and your heavenly Father seek.

Christ's strength can be your strength to overcome.

Hesitate not, lean on Jesus and the Victory is won!

Does the toil and care of the day cause your faith to sag?

Does the weakness of the flesh cause you to fret and lag?

Be always in prayer talking to God with true belief,

And you'll not faint for His solace brings peaceful relief.

Keep your faith alive all the day long!

Praise Him in all things in word and song!

Faith is the victory that brings us to the end

When Christ and His mighty angels will descend.

Then faith will be replaced with glorious sight

In the Land where all is day and no night.

Then the greatest of all that comes from above

Will remain and over shadow all--GOD'S LOVE!(15)

## **Let us Pray:**

### **JESUS:**


I pray in Your Name that the Holy Spirit will cause the seed sown thru the words of this book to be far more than leaves in the wind. Anchor fast the truths of Your Word in the soil of hungry and honest hearts. Bless the planted seed with the warm sunshine of God's Love and may the Holy Spirit cause new life to spring up and bring forth much fruit to Your Glory and the victory of each reader! --A-MEN!--

I leave you with a tune that the Lord gave me many years ago. I pray it will match the melody in your heart.

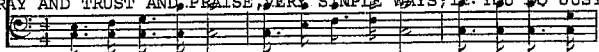
# Let's Just Praise The Lord!

## PRAY AND TRUST AND PRAISE

Words by Wilbur S. Johnson 1-2-78 Music by The Brocks




1. PRAY THE DOUBTS AWAY, NIGHT WILL TURN TO DAY; IF YOU PRAY AND  
2. TRUST THE LORD TODAY, IN BIG AND LITTLE WAYS; IF YOU TRUST AND  
4. PRAY AND TRUST AND PRAISE, VERY SIMPLE WAYS; IF YOU DO JUST WHAT



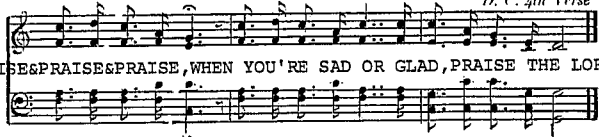
FINE

PRAY & PRAY, YOU'LL WALK THE VICTORY WAY.  
TRUST & TRUST, HE'LL GUIDE YOU ALL THE DAY. 3. PRAISE THE LORD TODAY,  
HE SAYS, YOU'LL WALK THE VICTORY WAY.



*D. C. 4th Verse*

PRAISE & PRAISE & PRAISE, WHEN YOU'RE SAD OR GLAD, PRAISE THE LORD ALWAYS



**FAITH ALIVE IN HEART, HOME and CHURCH**  
**NOTES - Chapter 10**

1. Acts 17:21
2. II Timothy 3:1,5,7
3. John 8:32
4. From Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, Pg.298
5. John 14:21 from The Amplified New Testament, (1975) Zondervan Publishers, Grand Rapids, Michigan. Copyright The Lockman Foundation (1958).
6. Job 1:1-6 - TLB
7. The Christian Family by Larry Christenson, Cp.7, Pg.157. Copyright Bethany Fellowship, Inc., Minneapolis, Minn.
8. Out of my file quote by the late J. Edgar Hoover, Director of the F.B.I.
9. Deuteronomy 6:4-7
10. Out of my file. Author unknown.
11. Christenson, Cp.6, Pg. 152.
12. Romans 1:17 as quoted by Paul from Habakkuk 2:4.
13. Original poem by Wilbur S. Johnson in memory of my father, GALEN O. JOHNSON - 1891-1976.
14. Quote from Marshall Leggett, minister of the Broadway Christian Church, Lexington, Kentucky from the "Christ in Youth" News sheet of Tulsa, Oklahoma.
15. An original poem by Rollin Stewart. From Meditations from the Heart, Page 5. Copyrighted by Rollin Stewart of Arkansas City, Kansas. Used by permission.
16. The Lord blessed me with the lyrics of this chorus on January 1, 1978. The music score is from the old chorus, "Sing and Smile and Pray," by Virgil P. Brock. Copyrighted in 1934, it is now in public domain.