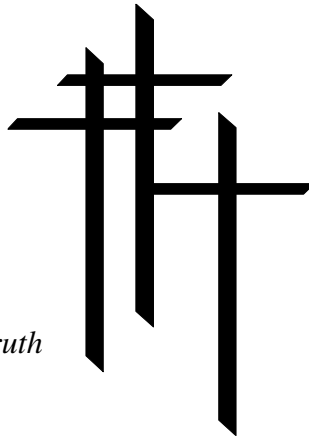


Timely Messenger

*Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth
Speaking the Truth in Love*



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THE NEED OF MAN

by Charles Wages

Almost without an exception when we think of our needs we refer to things that are material: food, shelter, clothing and a myriad of “things” that satisfy our earthly pleasures or egos. Also, many never denote the difference between “wants” and “needs.” God promises to provide our needs, but never to satisfy our never-ending wants. He knows that many of the things we want are not really needed, and that we would always be wanting more! We are often somewhat like the little girl to whom her

mother said, “Lillian, there were two pieces of cake in the pantry this morning, and now there is only one. How does this happen?” “I don’t know,” replied Lillian, regretfully, “It must have been so dark I didn’t see the other piece.”

The Bible tells us in Philippians 4:19: “But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” No doubt, the primary and prevailing emphasis in the verse is on the “spiritual” needs of man. Also, it is directed principally to believers in the

Lord Jesus Christ.

What are man’s spiritual needs? Well, first of all, he needs to be saved from sin—regenerated to a new life. After that, his spiritual needs are manifold. They are too many to mention, but we can always enumerate a few that are important to us all. As examples, a person needs

Companionship

This great need is noted in nature. Animals, birds, and insects all exhibit the necessity of being together. This could be called a “social instinct,” but really it goes far beyond that. Bees who are “cast out” of the swarm soon die. Even animals don’t desire to be “a loner.” But all of this, as interesting as it may be, only points up the far higher need of man to have companionship. A beautiful passage in Psalms 55:14 reads,

“We took sweet counsel together, and walked into the house of God in company.”

It is enlightening to

note that they “counseled together” before “walking” and before going into the house of God “in company.” Someone has aptly noted that one blessing to come out of the energy shortage is people doing things together more, such as car pooling. We must always keep in mind though that companionship desires and demands:

- The right kind of company. This becomes a major problem in society, especially the Christian society. Many of the heartaches and complications that surround every segment of society could be avoided if people were more discriminate in their associations. People have become overly reactive to discrimination because of the evils and mistakes that have been made in regard to human relationships. However, there is a difference between being discriminate and practicing discrimination for questionable reasons. Christians need to be discriminate in marriage,

business, and church affiliation among many areas of life.

- The right kind of Christian company. The Psalmist said, “I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts” (Psalms 119:63). In Proverbs 13:20, it is stated, “He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”

The philosophy of thinking that it makes no difference what church you attend, as long as you attend, does not fit into God’s desires for his children. Surely we should be desirous to be with those who love God’s Word, rightly divided (2 Tim. 2:15), and that honor the name of our blessed Saviour.

Yes, companionship is so needed by all, whether it is a natural, human relation or in the realm of worship and study of the Word. It is wonderful to see people together in love and fellowship.

Another vital need to the child of God is,

Comfort

If it were possible to characterize this world, it would be appropriate to say it is full of sorrow, pain, tragedy, corruption, and misery. Everyone is aware of “news” we receive daily through the media. Death and destruction are always in the headlines. Every family is affected at sometime or another. We need comfort, but from where does it come? Surely, the world offers no comfort to its victims. Only God can supply this need!

The Lord Jesus said in John 14, “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” Previous to that He had said, “And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you forever.” How we all need this comfort! We need someone to come alongside and help, someone to speak kindly, someone to support us.

We have great comfort in His Word. Romans 15:4 says,

“And whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.”

In Romans 15:5, God is spoken of as “the God of patience and consolation.” He is also spoken of as “the God of hope” (vs. 13) and the “God of peace” (vs. 33). We are never told that we will not experience sorrow, but He does inform us in 1 Thessalonians 4 “to sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.” And then, in verse 18, He says, “wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

May we consider this portion of God’s Word carefully which says,

“Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort: Who comforteth us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of

God.” (2 Cor. 1:3-4)

Another compelling need of the child of God is

Communion

This great need goes beyond physical companionship but involves the deeper issues of soul and spirit. It also involves more than just an “ordinance” or remembrance ritual. For example, this beautiful word the scriptures uses for communion is translated some 12 times in the New Testament as “fellowship.” The benediction used by Paul in 2 Corinthians 13:14 speaks of the communion of the Holy Ghost.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen”

Grace, love, and communion are so needed by us all, and God so wonderfully supplies these needs!

Again, it must be emphasized that communion

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Gregg Bing — Editor

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*Thanks for your help
in this matter!*

UNLESS THE LORD BUILDS THE HOUSE

By Gregg Bing

Continued from last month

“Unless the LORD builds the house, they labor in vain who build it ...” (Psalm 127:1)



In this series, we have been looking at God’s principles for building a godly home (or family) as found in Colossians 3:18-21. The last two months we have been looking at the responsibilities God has given to parents, particularly to fathers as the spiritual leaders in their homes. As we conclude this series, we want to focus on a special caution given to fathers

in Colossians 3:21.

“Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged.”

The word “provoke” means to stir up, to excite, or to stimulate. It is used in a good sense in 2 Corinthians 9:2, where Paul speaks of the Corinthians’ zeal provoking or stirring up others to minister to the needs of the saints. However, here in Colossians 3:21, the word is used in a negative sense of a father provoking a child to the point of strife or contention. The same basic idea is found in Ephesians 6:4:

“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”

In this verse the word

“provoke” is a different word which speaks specifically of rousing a child to wrath or excessive anger, even to the point of irritation or exasperation. This does not mean that a child will never become angry with their parents. Children have a sin nature which, in itself, can lead them to become angry even when they are not provoked. God’s command to fathers in these two verses is that they are not to stir up these types of negative feelings in their children.

Fathers need to be particularly careful in the area of discipline. When a child is corrected or punished for something unfairly or inconsistently, this can generate strife between the child and his parents, even feelings of anger and frustration. If this situation occurs on a regular basis the child can reach a point where he becomes discouraged (Col. 3:21). The word “discouraged” literally means “to lose heart” or become disheartened. In a sense, the child’s spirit can be broken, which affects his feelings, his passions, even his courage. Children

can become so discouraged that they give up even trying to please their parents.

Fathers need to let their “moderation be known unto all men” (KJV), in particular to their children. The word “moderation” is often translated “gentleness” or “mildness,” but it also carries the meaning of fairness or reasonableness. It is important that fathers deal gently with their children, and that they treat them fairly and reasonably, especially in the area of discipline.

Fathers should deal with their children in a controlled manner. To do so, fathers must, themselves, be controlled by the Holy Spirit of God (Eph. 5:18). When this is the case, they will be filled with the fruit of the Spirit, as described in Galatians 5:22-23:

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”

Let’s consider how each of these characteris-

tics affects how a father deals with his children.

Love: Fathers are to love their children unconditionally, with the same type of giving, caring love that God shows toward us. This type of love should govern and motivate a father in all his dealings with his children. Children need to feel this love from their parents because, when they experience it, they respond to it.

Peace: The word “peace” is a word that speaks of relationship. Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God (literally “peace toward God”) through our Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:1). We are brought into a wonderful, close relationship with our heavenly Father. Fathers who are at peace with God and have the peace of God in their hearts, should seek to maintain peace in their homes, a peace which builds solid relationships between all family members.

Longsuffering: Children can sometimes be exasperating and try the patience

of their parents. Fathers must remember that this is because they are children and are immature in many ways. This is even true of teen-agers. Fathers must be longsuffering in dealing with their children, being willing to endure their immature behavior and patiently correcting and training them so they may grow and mature in the Lord.

Kindness: The word “kindness” is somewhat difficult to define, although we know it when we experience it from others. Kindness means doing that which is beneficial or useful for others. Fathers should be kind to their children, seeking that which will benefit their children’s growth and development, especially in spiritual matters. Fathers need to treat their children as Paul describes in Ephesians 4:32: “And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.”

Goodness: The Bible speaks of the goodness of God. God desires good

things for His children (Jer. 29:11), therefore He gives good gifts to them to accomplish His purpose in their lives. The nature of God's gifts is described in James 1:17: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning." Fathers should seek to model their heavenly Father in their dealings with their own children, consistently desiring what is best for them. Children can learn about the goodness of God if their parents manifest this goodness in the home.

Faithfulness: Fathers should be faithful before their children. They need to demonstrate their faith in God and their faithfulness toward God, but they also need to be faithful toward their children. Fathers should be men of integrity, men who are true to their word. The writer of Proverbs gave this wise counsel: "The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him" (Prov. 20:7).

Gentleness: Fathers need to exhibit the trait of gentleness or meekness. The word "meekness" speaks of an attitude of humility, an acceptance of God's dealings with us as always being good. When a person has this type of attitude toward God, it will be demonstrated in a life that deals with others in gentleness. Fathers who are filled with the fruit of the Spirit will have just such an attitude and will be gentle and mild in the handling of their children.

Self-Control: Finally, fathers must exhibit self-control, meaning that they keep their passions under control, particularly their anger. This is especially important when admonishing or disciplining their children. Fathers must remember that harsh and unfair treatment of their children can cause great damage. This includes harsh words spoken in anger. James, chapter 3, speaks of the importance of controlling our tongues (our speech) for, though the tongue is a small member in the body, it can inflict

great harm, especially on a young and impressionable child.

If a father is to build a godly home and family and provide solid spiritual leadership, that home must be founded upon wisdom.

"Through wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches." (Prov 24:3-4)

This type of wisdom is not the wisdom of this world; it is the wisdom that comes from God.

"Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking

exist, confusion and every evil thing are there. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” (James 3:13-18)

This wisdom is not found in men’s philosophies or traditions. It is not found in “how-to” books about parenting. It is only found in the Word of God. Fathers who desire to train and raise godly children must spend time on a regular basis in God’s Word, for it is there they will find the wisdom to build and establish their homes as God intended.

The fear of the LORD
is the beginning of
knowledge, but
fools despise wisdom
and instruction.
— Proverbs 1:7

(Continued from page 3)

goes so much deeper than the concept most think of when the word is mentioned. The Apostle Paul was so thankful to the saints at Philippi “for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now” (Phil. 1:5). A great need of every believer is to have sweet communion with other believers in the proclamation and service of the gospel of God’s grace. So many are perverting the gospel, so many are preaching “another gospel,” that it gives a deep felt need for fellowship with those of like precious faith.

The Apostle Paul also expressed a great need to know the Lord “in the fellowship of his sufferings” (Phil. 3:10). Communion involves more than just enjoying our salvation or sharing it with others. It concerns a willingness to commune with the Lord in His sufferings. This really gets down to the “heart” of the matter. This is real “fellowship” of spirit. This enables us to better share in other believers’ sufferings

and results in real, deep, meaningful communion that meets a genuine need in our lives.

In the presentation concerning God’s great plan for this dispensation, the apostle Paul desired to:

“Make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ.” (Eph. 3:9)

The way Paul expressed this showed a burning desire on his part to have others involved in declaring this sacred secret. The “fellowship of the mystery” concerns God’s church for this age, the body of Christ. It also involves all the “spiritual blessings in heavenly places” that is the inheritance of all saints today. There is a real need for this message to be proclaimed today, and equally there is an accompanying need to have “communion” in this matter. This need is woefully being neglected today in “religion” and by

“religious” leaders.

Our spiritual needs were all satisfied at Calvary! God is perfectly able and perfectly willing to meet our every need. We need to remember the Scripture which says,

“But my God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:19)

Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God. —II Cor 3:5

Tribute to Charles Wages

*Pastor Emeritus
Grace Bible Church*

We thank the Lord for the many years you have faithfully served Him as pastor of this congregation; “speaking the truth in love;” compassionately dealing with individual problems of young and old; advising and encouraging young people to use their talents for the Lord.

We rejoice in our fellowship with you around the Word of God as we continue to grow in grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

On July 31, 2005, Pastor Charles Wages and his dear wife, Beverly, will celebrate 68 years of marriage as well as years of service to the Lord.

Thank you from all your friends, near and far.

— Mary Helen Pulliam

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you.
(Philippians 1:3)

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