What is Eternal Life?

IN THIS ISSUE:
- The Divine Estimate of Worldly Wisdom
- Jesus at the Door
- You Can Test God!
- Christ Our High Priest
- The Heavenly Priesthood
- The Redeemer
- Home
- Health Gem: 17 Slimming Superfoods
- Ellen White’s Vision: The Third Message Closed
Spring has to be one of the most beautiful times of the year. As I write this editorial, we have just passed from April into May. We try to keep a month ahead on our magazine; therefore we have already begun working on the June issue.

The colors outside are beautiful greens, as well as the yellows and purples of wild flowers. I have planted some tomato seeds, potatoes and onions in small pots and peat pots for replanting soon. We have several blueberry bushes, and the berries are starting to form on the bushes. I will have to cut my grass soon. We also hope to have some lettuce and collards.

I have begun getting wood for next winter. It takes a lot of wood to take care of our three stoves throughout the winter time. Most of the wood I cut is locust; there is a plentiful supply of dead locust on my and my neighbor’s land. I enjoy cutting and splitting—I hand split a lot of it. This plus my morning walks keep me in fairly good shape. We also follow a vegan diet with two meals a day.

I am so thankful that God found me and brought me into His wonderful message including the wonderful lifestyle He provided. God truly loves each of us and wants to see us in His kingdom, but He needs to be sure that we are safe to save. Sin must never raise its ugly head a second time. We need to be bearers of God’s message to a world that is in turmoil.

“The message we have to bear is not a message that men need cringe to declare. They are not to seek to cover it, to conceal its origin and purpose. Its advocates must be men who will not hold their peace day nor night. As those who have made solemn vows to God, and who have been commissioned as the messengers of Christ, as stewards of the mysteries of the grace of God, we are under obligation to declare faithfully the whole council of God. We are not to make less prominent the special truths that have separated us from the world, and make us what we are; for they are fraught with eternal interests. God has given us light in regard to the things that are now taking place in the last remnant of time, and with pen and voice we are to proclaim the truth to the world, not in a tame, spiritless way, but in demonstration of the spirit and power of God. The mightiest conflicts are involved in the furtherance of this message, and the results of its promulgation are of moment to both heaven and earth.

“The controversy between the two great powers of good and evil is soon to be ended; but to the time of its close there will be continual and sharp contests. We should now purpose, as did Daniel and his fellows in Babylon, that we will be true to principle, come what may. The flaming fiery furnace heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated did not cause these faithful servants of God to turn aside from allegiance to the truth. They stood firm in the time of trial and were cast into the furnace, and they were not forsaken of God. The form of the forth was seen walking with them in the flames, and they came forth not having even the smell of fire upon their garments…

“Today the world is full of flatterers and dissemblers; but God forbid that those who claim to be guardians of sacred trusts shall betray the interests of God’s cause through the insinuating suggestions and devices of the enemy of all righteousness.

“There is no time now to range ourselves on the side of the transgressors of God’s law, to see with their eyes, to hear with their ears, and to understand with their perverted senses. We must press together. We must labor to become a unit, to be holy in life and pure in character. Let those who profess to be servants of the living God no longer bow down to the idols of men’s opinions, no longer be slaves to any shameful lust, no longer bring a polluted offering to the Lord, a sin-stained soul.” TM 467-471.

May each of you, our readers, be what God would have you to be, perfect in His sight—living up to all the light He has given you, while accepting new light as it comes from Him. The battle is almost over. We stand on the edge of eternity. Let nothing keep you from experiencing God’s wonderful kingdom of light and love!
Our Mission:
It is the mission of Hope International and the editors of Our Firm Foundation to clearly present Christ and His truth. The days remaining for this world are few, and we must work quickly. We must boldly proclaim the historic truths of Adventism that place us on so firm a foundation in the midst of this troubled world. —Editor

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What is Eternal Life?

By Patricia J. Smith

The question, “What is eternal life?” may seem a silly one to ask. The very words, “eternal life” indicate what the meaning is - “living forever”; “life without end”, as commonly understood.

To get more precise, I checked out the meaning of “eternal” in Merriam-Webster's Dictionary. It defines “eternal” in these words:

a. having infinite duration: everlasting
b. of or relating to eternity; c. characterized by abiding fellowship with God <good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?- Mark 10:17 (Revised Standard Version>
2a. continued without intermission: perpetual <an eternal flame>
2b. seemingly endless <eternal delays>
3. archaic: infernal <some eternal villain...devised this slander- Shakespeare>
4. valid or existing at all times: timeless <eternal verities>”

Synonyms for “eternal” given in this dictionary are “ageless, continuing, dateless, enduring, abiding, everlasting, immortal, imperishable, lasting, ongoing, perpetual, timeless, undying.”

These definitions (besides the archaic one) and synonyms of “eternal” are the usual, familiar ways that people understand the word “eternal” and the phrase “eternal life”. Eternal life, as aforementioned would be defined as “perpetual life”, “unending life” or “everlasting life”. One who possesses eternal life would be described as “undying”.

THE BIBLE DEFINITIONS VS. THE WORLD’S DEFINITIONS

These are the dictionary’s definitions and synonyms, that reflect humanity’s thoughts on “eternal” and “eternal life”. However, as serious students of God’s Most Holy Word, we desire to obtain the wisdom of our Creator concerning what eternal life is through study of that Word. We are very well aware that the thoughts of God are not our thoughts, nor are His ways our ways. Therefore it should not surprise us at all if the Bible definition of “eternal life” does not match man’s dictionary definitions.

Let us now examine the words of Scripture concerning eternal life, for Jesus gave us insight in regard to this matter. He said, “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” John 5:39. The only scriptures that the Jews, including Jesus, had to read and study at this time were the Old Testament books of the Bible. Far from discarding them, dismissing them as no longer needed or abandoning the Old Testament Scriptures, our Lord and Savior encouraged their study!! Together with the New Testament, they are “given by inspiration of God, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” 2 Timothy 3:16, 17. Therefore in our study concerning eternal life, we will peruse both Old and New Testaments, comparing scripture with scripture, seeking to be taught the truth of God, through the instruction of our Heaven-sent Comforter who guides us into all truth, the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead.

ETERNAL LIFE = EVERLASTING LIFE

Where is eternal life found according to Scripture? “And this is the record, that God hath...
given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” 1 John 5:11. Eternal life is in Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God.

The apostle John goes on in verses 12, 13 of this same chapter to tell us who among the people on the earth have this eternal life which is in Jesus Christ. John wrote, “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

This eternal life that believers in Christ may know that they have is also called “everlasting life”, as evidenced by the words of Jesus to the people who sought Him. “And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:40. Later in his discourse Jesus said, “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.” Verse 54. From these two verses we can see and understand clearly that eternal life is the same as everlasting life.

CAN A PERSON HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, AND YET DIE?

The believers in Christ Jesus, those early Christians, to whom John declared that they should know that they had eternal life, are not alive today. They have all died and gone to their graves, where they rest awaiting the second coming of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in whom they believed. Having eternal or everlasting life did not prevent them from dying the first death.

The fact that they had eternal life and yet passed away, ceasing to live this earthly life, is a strange truth that alerts us to the fact that God's definition of “eternal life” is not the dictionary’s definition. It is here that we must ask some serious questions: How can a person have eternal life and yet die? Exactly what is the eternal life that is in the Son of God and what effect does it have on believers in Him?

ALL TRUE BELIEVERS IN CHRIST ARE EXEMPT FROM EXPERIENCING THE SECOND DEATH

You notice, of course, that we have not yet discovered from the Bible just what eternal life is, according to God’s Word. We have only seen thus far, that eternal life is in Jesus Christ, that believers in Jesus who truly accept Him as their personal Savior also have eternal life, and yet, their possession of eternal life does not prevent them from experiencing the first death, for Jesus Christ Himself died possessing eternal life.

The eternal life that they are given by Christ when they “believe in Him” prevents them from perishing, according to John 3:16. This perishing is called the “second death” in Revelation 20:6, which has no power on those who are raised in the first resurrection, the dead in Christ.

All believers in Christ, both the resurrected and the translated at His second coming are exempt from perishing, experiencing the second death, because they have accepted the death of Christ on the cross in their place as He tasted the second death (eternal death) for them.

On Calvary's cross, Christ took the sins of the world, that all who believe in Him may be made the righteousness of God in Him; He took our wages of sin-the second death- and gave us the gift of God, which is eternal life, which is in Him.
Throughout the Scriptures, the Law of God is Connected with Life

Probing deeper into the Scriptures we discover exactly what is in Jesus. In Psalm 40:7, 8 these words are spoken—“Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Comparing these verses with Hebrews 10:5-7, we understand that Christ spoke the words of Psalm 40:7, 8 before His incarnation. He declared that the law of God was within His heart, His mind.

When the rich young ruler inquired of Him, “Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” Matt. 19:16, Jesus directed him, if he truly desired to enter into life, to keep the commandments (verse 17). Clearly, the commandments of God are able to lead on into life; in fact the eternal life that is in Jesus and that is received by believers in Him, is the Ten Commandments, the moral law of God.

Throughout the Scriptures, the law of God is connected with life.

“For the commandment is a lamp: and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.” Prov. 6:23. “So shall I keep thy law continually forever and ever.” Ps. 119:44.

“My righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.” Ps. 119:142.

The Ten Commandments are a Perfect Transcript of God’s Holy Character

Now, verse 172 of Psalm 119 declares, “My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness.” So we can rewrite Psalm 119:142, using the Bible’s own definition of “righteousness”, which is “all thy commandments”. Instead of “righteousness”, we can substitute “commandments” for they are equal one to the other. Our rewrite of Psalm 119:142 reads: “All Thy commandments are everlasting commandments, and thy law is the truth.”

Besides the Ten Commandments being everlasting, righteous, and the truth, the Bible further declares that they are a perfect transcript of God’s eternal holy character. It is only through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ who has eternal life—the law of God—in His heart (His mind) that we can receive eternal life—God’s law—in our minds. “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.” Hebrews 8:10. After the cross, true believers in Christ compose the spiritual house of Israel, the seed of Abraham (See Romans 1:29 and Galatians 3:29).

Let us now examine the scriptures that show us that the Ten Commandments are a perfect reflection of the Godhead—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

What God is, the Ten Commandments are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>God</th>
<th>The Ten Commandments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perfect</td>
<td>Mt. 5:48</td>
<td>Psalm 19:7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>True</td>
<td>John 17:3</td>
<td>Nehemiah 9:13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Truth</td>
<td>John 14:6, Deut. 32:4</td>
<td>Psalm 119:151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy</td>
<td>Psalm 145:17</td>
<td>2 Peter 2:21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Just</td>
<td>Isaiah 45:21</td>
<td>Romans 7:12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>Psalm 34:8</td>
<td>Romans 7:12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fiery</td>
<td>Psalm 50:3</td>
<td>Deut. 33:2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Righteous</td>
<td>Daniel 9:14</td>
<td>Deut. 4:8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Righteousness</td>
<td>Jer. 23:6</td>
<td>Psalm 119:172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faithful</td>
<td>2 Thes. 3:3</td>
<td>Psalm 119:86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everlasting</td>
<td>Psalm 90:2</td>
<td>Psalm 111:7, 8</td>
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</tbody>
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John 12:50
THE FULFILLING OF GOD’S LAW IS LOVE

At this point, dear reader, it is very clear to me, and I pray it is also clear to you, that those who desire to get rid of the Ten Commandments, the moral law of God, teaching the unbiblical doctrine that they were nailed to the cross and are no longer valid for the believer in Christ to obey and keep today, are fighting against God and desire to get rid of Him as well! It is His holy character that is outlined in all ten of the commandments. Those who hate God’s law, excusing their disobedience to it, are but continuing the war against God and His law that Lucifer, who made himself into the devil and Satan, began in Heaven.

Another aspect of the Ten Commandments that is so desperately hated by the enemy of all souls, the devil, is the fact that the fulfilling of the law is love. Just as God is love (1 John 4:8) so the law of God is love worked out in the life, for “love is the fulfilling of the law”. Rom. 13:10. When we truly love God and keep His commandments in the power of Christ, we will abide in the love of Jesus. (See John 15:10). True love to God cannot be separated from the Ten Commandments which are righteousness and everlasting life. “For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3.

TO KNOW THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IS TO KNOW GOD

1 John 3:15 sheds more light on this subject, declaring that a transgressor of God’s law does not have eternal life. “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.” A further glimpse of the Biblical character of eternal life is given us in John 17:2, 3, where Jesus says, “As thou has given him (the Son) power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” Life eternal, says Jesus, is knowing the Father, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, who was sent by the Father.

Do the Ten Commandments have anything to do with knowing God? The Bible answer is, “Yes, they most certainly do!” The Holy Spirit through the apostle John shows, that if we do not keep the Ten Commandments, we do not know God, no matter what our lips say, but are lying to ourselves and others. “And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 2:3, 4. Remember, that Jesus is the Living Truth (See John 14:6) and His Word, esp. the Ten Commandments, are the Written Truth (See Psalm 119:151). Neither Jesus nor the Law of God is in one who does not keep the Ten Commandments.

YIELDING COMPLETELY TO JESUS ENABLES US TO REFLECT HIS CHARACTER

Let us not fight against the perfect, holy, just, good, righteous, and everlasting Ten Commandments of God, which are eternal life. My prayer is that all of us may be found among God’s end-time saints which keep His commandments (including the fourth, regarding God’s Holy Seventh day Sabbath) and the faith of Jesus in these evil days. Like Jesus, may it also be our custom to obey the Father and rest and worship on His Holy Sabbath. (See Luke 4:16, Mark 2: 27, 28, John 15:10). Only then will we have the whole law in our minds and hearts as did our Savior. Only by yielding completely to Jesus, and by His almighty power, obeying all ten of His commandments, can we cease our natural, carnal fight against God and begin to reflect His holy, eternal character, as does His Holy Law.

Patricia is a second -generation SDA writer who loves to study and share the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. She enjoys biking, rock collecting, and spending time with family. She resides in Louisiana with her husband and two children.
“Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God; for it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men; for all things are yours.”

Such is the admonition of Paul to the Corinthian church. He would not have them dazzled or misled by those who were “wise in this world”. Instead of seeking distinction, they must become fools in the estimation of worldly wise men, if they would become wise in the estimation of God. Extraordinary talent was not to be considered the chief thing; for unless consecrated to God, and sanctified by his Spirit, it would prove a curse rather than a blessing.

**Worldly wisdom is too highly valued**

“The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.” The wisdom of this world is too highly valued, the wisdom from above too little sought, by the professed people of the Lord. Men may have a knowledge of Christian doctrine, and yet understand little of Christian experience. Many are keen, apt, prompt, in worldly affairs, while they manifest little interest, tact, or energy in the service of God. They do not bring their talent and shrewdness into exercise in watching to discern the devices of Satan, and studying how they may outgeneral the enemy. They do not summon all their powers to form wise plans, and to make earnest, systematic effort to advance the cause of God.

**The cause of God should be our first interest**

Every man, of whatever trade or profession, should make the cause of God his first interest; he should not only exercise his talents to advance the Lord’s work, but he should cultivate his ability to this end. The wisdom and energy used in worldly,
temporal things should be devoted to spiritual and eternal things. Many a man devotes months and years to the acquirement of a trade or profession that he may become successful in worldly matters, who yet makes no effort to cultivate those talents which would make him a successful laborer in the vineyard of the Lord. This is the great sin of the professed people of God. They serve themselves and serve the world; they become shrewd, successful financiers; but they neglect to use in his service the talents which God has given them. Their tact in worldly matters is becoming stronger through exercise; that in spiritual things is becoming weaker through inactivity.

We are to meet and expose the deceptions of the ungodly
The present is a time when these talents, used in the cause of God, would tell with great effect in the upbuilding of his kingdom. But Satan has outgeneraled us in this matter. There are men professing godliness, who are false teachers, tempters, seducers.

They have cultivated their talents in this direction, and they employ all their ingenuity in disseminating unbelief, impiety, infidelity. Had the true followers of Christ been cultivating their ability with equal zeal and diligence, they might now be wise enough to discern the devices of Satan; they would be prepared to stand in defense of the truth, and to meet and successfully expose the deceptions of the ungodly.

It is important that we take heed how we build for eternity
The church of Christ, and especially the ministers of the gospel, are building up the temple of the Lord,--building upon the foundation-stone, which is Christ himself. Paul testifies: “Every man’s work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it.” We are building for eternity; and it is doubly important now that we take heed how we build. If we indulge doubt and unbelief, we are bringing worthless material to the foundation-stone. It is only as we labor in faith that we can bring to the building that which is precious and enduring. Many are drifting into darkness and infidelity, picking flaws with the Bible, and bringing in superstitious inventions, unscriptural doctrines, and philosophical speculations; others divert the mind from important truths by exciting trifling inquiries and disputations. Those who permit themselves to be thus hindered are giving place to the adversary, while they might be bringing gold, silver, and precious stones to lay upon the foundation.

A man of strict fidelity is a valuable steward
It is our work to direct souls to the living oracles. We must present to them sound doctrine, even the faith once delivered to the saints. We must show them the truth in its beauty, that they may be led to renounce error. We must instruct them in faith, love, obedience, and hope, that through much prayer they may grow up “a holy temple in the Lord”. The day of Judgment will test every man’s work. Let us so build that our work may endure the fiery trial.

Paul says: “Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.” A man of strict fidelity is a valuable steward, though he may not possess as great accomplishments or as high order of talents as do some others. One who seeks to advance the truth for the glory of God and the good of souls, without respect of persons, and regardless of his own ease, interest, or honor,--such a man should be highly esteemed, though he may not possess learning or eloquence. He is God’s nobleman. In the sight of Heaven he presents the highest type of manhood.
Even the enmity of the wicked will prove a blessing

And such a man will not lose his reward. Paul testifies: “Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ’s: and Christ is God’s.” Here are presented the privileges of true believers. In possessing Christ, they possess all things. As his chosen, redeemed people, they are joint-heirs with him. The abilities, gifts, and services of apostles and ministers are intended for their benefit. All the treasuries of God are opened to them. The world, with everything in it, is theirs, so far as it can do them good. Even the enmity of the wicked will prove a blessing by disciplining them for Heaven. In the promise, “All things are yours,” there is bounty without limit; but we must have faith in order to appropriate this promise, and receive the blessings which it offers.

Secret sins will be laid open in the judgment

When the Judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened, there will be many astonishing disclosures. Men will not then appear as they now appear to human eyes and finite judgments. Secret sins will then be laid open to the view of all. Motives which have been hidden in the dark chambers of the heart will be revealed.

Not all are Christ’s who adopt his name and wear his badge

Jesus says, “Follow me.” Are they following him who indulge sinful habits and enjoy the frivolities of the world? Can we see the footprints of the Saviour in the path they tread?—No. If we have not the Spirit of Christ, we are none of his. We cannot serve two masters; we cannot belong to Christ and to Belial. If in our habits and practices we are the world’s, we do not belong to Christ. We may be his in the sense in which the earth and the beasts of the forest are his, but we are not his chosen ones.

Will we choose the wisdom of this world, or wisdom from above?

To be Christ’s is to be consecrated to his work, to employ every power of the mind and every member of the body to do his will and to advance his glory. It is to open the heart to his word, to contemplate his matchless charms until the overflowing tribute of the soul shall be, “Hear what the Lord has done for me.”

The voice of Divine Wisdom, through the words of the apostle, speaks to us as it spoke to the church at Rome more than eighteen hundred years ago: “To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.” Will we hesitate to choose between the wisdom of this world, which ends in death, and the wisdom from above, which makes us wise unto everlasting life?

Basel, Switzerland
ST, May 26, 1887
“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my
voice and open the door, I will come to him, and will I sup
with him, and he with me.”  Rev. 3:20

Jesus, thou the world’s Redeemer,
Canst thou deign to dwell with me,
A rebellious, fallen sinner,
One who was thine enemy?

Tell, oh tell me, dare I suffer
Thee to enter this abode?
What to thee have I to offer,
Save my guilty soul’s foul load?

But thou, Jesus, still art knocking
At the portal of my heart,
And shall I, thy mercy mocking,
Bid thee from my soul depart?

Nay, but knock thou ever harder,
Till thou break this heart of stone;
Come, oh come thou ever nearer,
Till I see but thee alone
You Can Test God!

By Joe Olson

“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.” Mal. 3:10. This is one of the few verses in the Bible where God actually says to “prove” Him, or to test Him. He literally says that if you want to find out if He will bless you, to the point that you will not be able to receive it, do this thing. And that thing, is to bring the tithes, or ten percent of your income, into His storehouse. “Prove Me,” He says. “Check Me out and see if I will not do exactly what I have promised.”

Our tithe is something we return to God ~ it belongs to Him

Interestingly, He does not say that you have to like it or want to do it or have a good attitude about it… He just says to do it. “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.” 2 Cor. 9:7. I’m sure we have all heard this verse before… God loves a cheerful giver. God does want us to be happy about supporting His work. But, we do not give our tithe to God. We return our tithe to God. There is a huge difference!

God says the tithe is His. “And all the tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the LORD’S: it is holy unto the LORD.” Lev. 27:30. God says that all the tenth of whatever is produced is His. If it is His, then how could you “give” it to Him? If I own the car, no one can give it to me… it is already mine. The only way you can give me something is if I don’t own it. But God says that the tithe is His. So, the best we can do is to return it. If it was His to start with, then we can only return it to Him.

God says the tithe is holy

“And concerning the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatsoever passeth under the rod, the tenth shall be holy unto the LORD.” Lev. 27:32. God says that not only is the tithe His, but that the tithe is holy. It is sacred. You don’t touch it. It’s not yours. You don’t use it or borrow it or keep it for any other purpose. It is holy unto the Lord.

How serious is God about things He deems holy? The ark of God was holy. It was just a box made of wood and covered with gold. Nothing particularly special about it other than maybe being pretty or even valuable.

There have been many boxes made that were even more ornate or more costly over the years. But when God said it was holy, everything changed. Now this box is special. Now this box has been elevated in significance.

You really don’t want God to smite you

So, what happened when someone touched the box that God said was holy unto Him? “And when they came to Nachon’s threshingfloor, Uzzah put forth his hand to the ark of God, and took hold of it; for the oxen shook it. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error; and there he died by the ark of God.” 2 Sam. 6:6,7.

God said the box was holy. You don’t touch things that God says are holy. It isn’t yours…it is God’s. When Uzzah touched the ark, what happened? God smote him. You really don’t want God to smite you. When God has to smite, the results are never pleasant. Ask Uzzah. Ask the Philistines. Ask the Jews. “The LORD will smite thee with the botch of Egypt, and with the emerods, and with the scab, and with the itch, whereof thou canst not be healed.” Deut. 28:27. You can believe that you just don’t want to have God smite you. If God says it’s holy…leave it alone! He is extremely serious about this.

Leave it alone!
The ark was taken by the Philistines
when they were warring against the Jews, and they found out how serious God was about His holy things.

They were practically wiped out because of it. There was a whole lot of smiting going on. So, they got rid of it. They no longer wanted the holy thing in their presence. So, some cows took a cart with the ark on it to Bethshemesh. These were Jews! And these Jews got a bright idea. “Hey,” they said… “Let’s look into the ark while we have it here… wouldn’t that be cool?” They didn’t want to keep it. They weren’t going to take anything out of it. All they wanted to do was to take a quick peek inside. They were just curious. I mean, how angry can God get over a little peek? “And he smote the men of Bethshemesh, because they had looked into the ark of the LORD, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, because the LORD had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter.” 1 Sam. 6:19. Fifty thousand people smitten! That’s a lot of smiting! That’s how serious God is about what He calls holy. If it is His, leave it alone. Leave it way, way, way alone!

Tithe is to be paid on your increase

The tithe is not ours… it is God’s. Again, since it is His, we cannot give it to Him; all we can do is return it. Now, when we see how important God views these things, let’s look again at what the tithe is. “Thou shalt truly tithe all the increase of thy seed, that the field bringeth forth year by year.” Deut. 14:22. The tithe is to be what you have made after your expenses… in other words, the increase. If you have spent $100.00 to make $200.00, the tithe, or the increase, is $100.00. If you are a farmer, and it costs you $1,000 in fuel and $1,000 in tractor and truck expense, and you made $10,000 in crop sales, then your tithe is on $6,000 and would be $600. Tithe is on your increase.

Our paycheck is not our only increase

Please understand that I am saying this not to upset you, but to avoid being smitten by God! As we have already learned, God is very serious about what is His and what He calls holy. If He says ten percent is His, and we give Him three percent or seven percent or even 9 and a ½ percent, are we tithing? Tithing is 10 percent! It’s kind of like the 10 commandments… if you keep three or seven or nine, are you a commandment keeper?

We are to tithe on all our increase. Paychecks are not our only increase are they? “And as soon as the commandment came abroad, the children of Israel brought in abundance the firstfruits of corn, wine, and oil, and honey, and of all the increase of the field; and the tithe of all things brought they in abundantly.” 2 Chron. 31:5. They brought tithes of “all things”. In other words, whatever the increase was, they tithed on it. They returned to God what He claimed as His… 10 percent of the increase, whatever that might be.

We are even to tithe on our garden produce

If someone gives us a gift card to a restaurant for $50.00, then we need to return to God His $5.00 tithe. If we
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get an inheritance of $1,000 then we return to God His $100. If we plant a garden and get $500 worth of fruit and vegetables, then we return to God His $50.00. Do you think we are getting a little carried away here with the increase from the garden? What did Jesus say? “Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.” Matt. 23:23.

Jesus pronounced a woe on the scribes and Pharisees because they tithed on the increase of the little herbs in their gardens and left out the more important things. He said that they should have done the other things, like judgment and mercy and faith. But then He added, “… and not to leave the other undone.” What other? The tithing on the garden produce… even herbs! Ten percent of the increase… all increase… is God’s! And “smitation” will take place if it is not returned.

**Have you been smitten?**

Unfortunately, many people do not tithe, or tithe correctly, because they do not get smitten. Or… do they? Maybe they don’t get emerods or scabs or itching or some other dread disease… but is that the only way God smites?

At one point, after the Israelites had been released from captivity from Babylon, they were more concerned with their own homes than God’s house. His temple was the light in the darkness. His house was in disarray.

His house was holy and it was not being taken care of. His center for evangelism was not being kept up, while everyone was taking care of their own homes and yards. How do you think God felt about that? They were putting themselves first and God and His house was a distant second. What was the result? “Ye looked for much, and, lo, it came to little; and when ye brought it home, I did blow upon it. Why? saith the LORD of hosts. Because of mine house that is waste, and ye run every man unto his own house. Therefore the heaven over you is stayed from dew, and the earth is stayed from her fruit. And I called for a drought upon the land, and upon the mountains, and upon the corn, and upon the new wine, and upon the oil, and upon that which the ground bringeth forth, and upon men, and upon cattle, and upon all the labour of the hands.” Hagg. 1:9-11.

The tithe is not for the purpose of enriching God

God’s work has to be first in our minds. What are the needs of His ministries and His evangelists? This is His holy work! Is it being supported and blessed and cared for like we care for our own homes and lives? The Jews were not focusing on what was most important. They were not treating God’s holy work with the respect and the privilege it deserved. But, they were not smitten with boils or emerods or scabs. But did that mean they were not smitten? Far from it! For some reason, and they couldn’t figure out why… they were not getting ahead. It didn’t matter what they did, they just could not prosper. They were just getting by. God addressed this with them… “Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.” Hagg. 1:6. It reminds me of the hamster or the rat that just keeps running on that wheel, but never gets anywhere. It’s why so many people say we live in the “rat race”. We go all day long, year and year after year… and to what end? So many of us go nowhere and get nowhere. Why? Why is that? Because we don’t acknowledge God and His sovereignty over us. He is our Lord and Master. He is our Creator and heavenly Father. He is our reason for existence. And He created a plan to remind us of His sovereignty and rulership. He developed this wonderful system to keep ever in our minds who He is and who we are and what this life is all about. It is called tithing. God never intended for this system to enrich Him. He really doesn’t need our money. This system was designed to keep the devil from deceiving us into thinking that we are all alone, that there is no God and no one out there looking after us.

Test God, and watch Him bless you!

But, look how effective the devil has been. When we return to God what is His, we acknowledge that He is the One who gave us everything to begin with. Every time we return our tithe, we grasp that we are not alone and that God has blessed us with life and
health and ability to get gain. You can never forget God if you are constantly tithing to Him. And when others know you tithe, they recognize that you believe that there is a God and that He is the giver of all things good. And you can tell them that they too can test God. You can test Him to see if He will bless you. You can test Him to see if He will smite you too. Can they not get ahead? Do they seem to be in an endless round of circles, working and striving and sweating, but never getting ahead? Then you can tell them how to get blessed. You can show them how to put the money in bags that don’t have holes! And when they do that, and they acknowledge that there is a God and that He is the beneficent God we believe in, then every dollar they have returned to Him will come back to them many times over. You simply can’t outgive God.

Everyone who tithes has an amazing story!

Peter wondered what he and his companions would get for giving all to Jesus. “Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, or for the gospel’s, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.” Mark 10:28-30.

Do you think ten percent is too much to return? Do you think that if you were to return a full ten percent that you would not have enough to pay your bills? Test Him! He asks us to test Him. He says to prove whether or not He will bless you with more than you can receive. Do you have more than you can receive right now? Would you like to? Do you want other input, besides what God says? Ask others who return a faithful tithe. Ask them if they think it is worth it. Ask them if they are able to pay their bills. See if they think they have been blessed by God as a result of returning to Him what is His. Ask them if they had extra to begin with when they started tithing. I am here to tell you that you will hear amazing stories. I have my own and so does every single person who has ever tithed.

J.C. Penny grew quite prosperous through tithing

There are many famous people who have tithed throughout their lives and glorified God as a result. J.C. Penny is a perfect example. He started returning to God ten percent when he started his department store. As he grew more prosperous, he returned God’s ten percent and then gave another ten percent. He grew more prosperous. God blessed him with more. And J.C. started giving 30 percent to God. Then 40 and then 50 until J.C. was giving God 90 percent of his income and keeping just 10 percent for himself. I think if the current owners of J.C. Penny did what J.C. did, the department store chain would be doing much better right now. What do you think?

God wants to bless you!

The stories are as endless and as exciting as each individual’s experience. I could tell you stories of my own that would amaze, because God is faithful. He wants to bless you. He wants you to continually recognize who He is so you can be at peace and have comfort all the days of your life. He wants to keep the devil’s deceptions away from you. He wants to do for you all you want to do for your child… and so much more! “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?” Matt. 7:11. Don’t block the God of all creation from giving you good things! He wants to do it.

Let’s resolve today to let Him open those windows of heaven so we will not be able to receive all He wants to give us!

Joe Olson serves as the executive director and chairman of the board of Hope International. He also travels as an international speaker.
Christ Our High Priest
By Stephen Haskell

The Saviour has many titles, for He “hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than all the angelic host of heaven. Of the many titles bestowed upon Him, there is none more dear to humanity than the “Lamb of God” and “High Priest”. By virtue of these two offices He lifts poor fallen humanity up where they can share in His glorious kingdom of grace, even while in the midst of this sin-cursed earth.

How can we fail to love Him who offered His life for us?
In the typical service the one who realized he was a sinner must bring a lamb for a sin-offering. The priest could not officiate for him without this offering. That entire service was but a great kindergarten lesson, making the way of salvation so simple that none could fail to comprehend it. When we realize that we have sinned, we remember our “Lamb”, confess our sins, and in His name they are forgiven; then He officiates as High Priest in our behalf before the Father. He pleads the merits of His blood, and covers our life, stained with sin, with the robe of His spotless righteousness, and we stand before the Father “accepted in the Beloved”. How can we fail to love Him who offered His life for us? Christ could say of His Father, “Therefore doth My Father love me, because I lay down My life.” Even the infinite love of the Father for His Son was increased by that act.

The forerunner announces the approach of the royal carriage
In the type, the blood of the sin-offering was shed in the court, and then the priest entered the sanctuary with the blood to present it before the Lord. The Saviour gave His life a sacrifice for sin here upon the earth; and as he entered the heavenly sanctuary as High Priest, He is called the “Forerunner”. Under no circumstances, except as He enters “within the veil” of the heavenly sanctuary, is that name applied to the Saviour.

In all monarchical forms of government the forerunner is a familiar character. In gorgeous uniform, with waving plumes, he rides before and announces the approach of the royal carriage. While he is always hailed with joy by the waiting crowds, yet he is not the center of attraction; their eyes do not follow him as he passes on, but are turned down the road whence he came to get the first glimpse of the royal personage of whom he is the forerunner.

Those brought forth from the grave at His resurrection were the “wave sheaf”
Of the many condescensions on the part of our blessed Master, this is one of the grandest. When He entered heaven a mighty Conqueror over death and the grave, before the entire heavenly host and representatives of other worlds, He entered a forerunner for us. He presented the “wave sheaf”, those brought forth from their graves at the time of His resurrection, as a sample of the race He had died to redeem, thus directing the attention of that wonderful assemblage down the road whence He came to watch-for royalty? yes, for royalty made so by His precious blood. It is only a company of poor, frail mortals stumbling along and often falling by the way; but when they reach the heavenly gate, they will enter “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ”.

“He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye”
It meant much for us that Christ entered within the veil as our Forerunner, for all heaven is watching the church of God on earth. When tempted by the enemy to doubt God’s love and care, remember that on account of the great sacrifice made, you are so dear to the Father that “he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye”. Heaven and earth are closely united since Christ entered within the veil as our Forerunner. The attention of every angel in glory is centered upon those striving to follow in Christ’s footsteps. “Are they (the angels) not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Why should we falter by the way, and disappoint the heavenly host who are watching for us to come over the same road that our Forerunner passed as a mighty Conqueror over death and the grave?

We cannot follow in His footsteps in our own strength
But let us never forget that it is a blood-stained pathway. “Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously.” We can not follow in His footsteps in our own strength. For that reason “in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make
reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted. Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus”.

In the typical services the priests represented the work of our High Priest

In the earthly sanctuary not only the high priest but also common priests officiated, because it was impossible for one man to perform all the work; but it required the work performed by all the priests in the typical services to represent the work of our High Priest. The work of one year was taken as a type of the entire work of our High Priest. During the year “the priests (plural, both high and common) went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God.” This continued all the year, except one day; on that day, the service changed and “into the second (apartment) went the high priest alone,...not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people”. These priests served “unto the example and shadow of heavenly things”.

Christ will blot out the sins of the righteous, nevermore to be remembered

When Christ entered heaven, He went as the Anti-type of the earthly service God had ordained, and entered upon His work within the first veil of the heavenly sanctuary. When the typical work ordained by God in the first apartment of the earthly sanctuary had fully met its Anti-type, He passed through the second veil into the glorious apartment of the antitypical holy of holies. There He is to perform the marvelous service which will end in the blotting out and total destruction of the sins of the righteous, nevermore to be remembered by the redeemed host nor by God Himself.

The Forerunner will rejoice over them with singing

When Christ stands upon the sea of glass, and places the glittering crowns upon the heads of the company who have traveled the road made sacred by the foot prints of their Forerunner, albeit with faltering step and through falling tears, and who are clad in robes made white in the blood of the Lamb, He will see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. He will rejoice over them with singing, and all heaven will ring with melody as the angels who have served under their Commander in the work of saving souls, join in singing, “Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever.”

The Heavenly Priesthood

His earthly work is done,
The Victim’s blood is shed,
And Jesus now is gone
His people’s cause to plead;
He stands in heaven, their great
High Priest,
He bears their names upon his breast.

He sprinkles with his blood
The mercy-seat above;
He seals our brotherhood
With his atoning love;
And justice threatens us no more,
But mercy yields her boundless store.

No temples made with hands
His place of service is;
In heaven itself he stands,
A heavenly priesthood his;
In him the shadows of the law
Are all fulfilled, and now withdraw.

And though awhile he be
Hid from the eyes of men,
His people look to see
Their great High Priest again;
In brightest glory he will come,
And take his waiting people home.

~Thomas Kelly
God so loved the world, that He gave His only Begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16)

The eternal purpose of God from the beginning has been that every intelligent being should yield Him obedience and loving service, because by this very loving service man would reach the highest degree of happiness.

All heaven was filled with sorrow when man fell

Man was created perfect—in the image of God. Through sin his innocence was lost, condemning him to death. Justice demanded this, but while abhorring sin, God loved the sinner still, because God never changes. Mal. 3:6, James 1:17.

The heavenly angels loved man also, so all heaven was filled with sorrow when he fell. The law of God, which the heavenly beings held as sacred, man had trampled upon; and death, which till then had not been known, would now follow everywhere in the track of sin. To the guilty pair there seemed no way of escape.

What a struggle for God to give up His only son for this wretched race!

There was One, however, and only one in the universe, who could pay the debt, and redeem lost man. He only could redeem who had power to create. The Son of God, the only Begotten of the Father, could meet man’s needs, and He offered Himself as a ransom for sinners. But will God give up His only Son, whom He dearly loves, for such a purpose? Does He love the poor sinner enough to make such a sacrifice for him? What a struggle it must have been for the great God to decide to give up His much beloved Son to die for a wretched, guilty race!

Christ is ours now, through the endless ages of eternity

Yet He did this very thing, for His love is an “everlasting love”. Jer. 31:3. So when man fell, “God so loved the world that He gave His only Begotten Son.” Not only did Christ die for us, but He has been given to us forever. He is ours, now, and through the endless ages of eternity. What boundless love is this! It is beyond all human understanding. It is, however, the love of God, the Father, toward man.

How different is this from the thought some entertain, that God is a pitiless Judge, whose desire is to destroy the transgressor, and that the constant pleading of Christ alone prevents Him from pouring out the
vials of His wrath upon the sinner’s head.

**Man has departed from God’s ways**

But we can now see that God and Christ are one in counsel, one in purpose, one in love, and one in their desire and effort to “save that which was lost.”

It is not God who must be reconciled to man. God’s character has never changed; but man has departed from God’s ways. Man, through sinful thoughts, stands unreconciled to God. To teach him to love God, and so to bring him into harmony with Him, was the mission of Christ to this earth. This, too, was the work of God, for “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself.” 2 Cor. 5:19.

Therefore, whenever Christ appeared among men, God was working through Him to redeem man. All that Christ said or did was the life of God, showing through Christ, to tell of His love to fallen humanity.

**Christ was tempted in all points**

Through sin, man had become defiled. He had exchanged his beautiful garments of righteousness and glory for filthy rags. He was wearing the clothing of a convict, and was under sentence of death.

But Christ did not permit the thought of man’s degradation to hold Him back from the lost world. He left His royal robes in heaven, and came to earth to live with, and wear the garb of, criminals. He took their nature. Heb. 2:17, Rom. 8:3.

He was tempted in all points as they were. Heb. 4:15. He was made “to be sin” for them, though He knew no sin. 2 Cor. 5:21.

He came to earth in human form, and placed Himself by the sinner's side, in order to show him a perfect life, that is, God's life in human flesh, saying by this to the sinner, “This is what God desires you to be.”

If we will permit Him, He will rescue us from our criminal position, take from us our sin-stained garments of filthy rags, and clothe us with the beautiful garments of His righteousness.

**Righteousness is the free gift of God to all who will accept it**

In Zach. 3:3-5 we read as follows: “Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. And he (the angel) answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him (Joshua) he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.” In this text Joshua represents the sinner, and also the change that takes place in him after he becomes reconciled to God.

Fallen man cannot earn righteousness by any works he may perform. It is the free gift of God to all who will accept it. When a sinner turns to Christ, realizing that in so doing lies his only hope, he is pardoned, justified, and clothed upon by the righteousness of Christ. Christ’s righteousness is then imputed to him.

**The law could not be changed to save the sinner**

Our Saviour illustrated this in the prayers of the Pharisee and the publican: “Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners,
unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

“And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” Luke 18:10-14. He was forgiven, justified, made righteous.

Only one way could be devised to save the fallen. Man had broken God’s holy law, and cut himself off from God. That law could not be changed to save the sinner, and even if it could have been, this would not have reconciled man to God. To change God’s law, therefore, would not elevate man, on the contrary it would lower the Creator. This could not be, and so the suffering of the Son of God had to follow.

The holy angels are also drawn to Him

When the eternal purpose of God is fully worked out in the wonderful plan of redemption, “not only men, but angels, will ascribe honor and glory to the Redeemer; for even they are secure only through the sufferings of the Son of God.

“But not only those who are washed by the blood of Christ, but the holy angels also, are drawn to Him by His crowning act of giving His life for the sins of the world. ‘And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto me’ (the word “man” in our translation of the Bible is a supplied word, and is not found in the original), not only earth, but heaven; for of Him ‘the family in heaven and earth is named.’” John 12:32; Ephesians 3:15. “That in the dispensation of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him.” Eph. 1:10.

The plan of redemption met immediately the sin and fall of man. God accepted the offer of Christ to die for the sinner. Hence Christ is the “Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” Revelation 13:8. Throughout the ages the sacrifice of Christ has been the hope and comfort of the faithful.

The blood of the innocent Lamb was a type of the blood of Christ

The blood of Christ, through faith, brought pardon to the repentant sinner during the ages before His death, just as surely as it does to us who are living this side of the crucifixion. Their faith looked forward to a Saviour to come; ours looks backward to the crucified Redeemer of Calvary.

The blood of the innocent lamb, which was offered as a sacrifice by the patriarchs, was a type of the blood of Christ. It showed their faith in the coming Redeemer, and brought pardon for their sins. These sacrifices were necessary until Christ should come and die; for “without shedding of blood is no remission.” Hebrews 9:22. Our acceptance of Christ, by faith, brings pardon for our transgression. Thus the gospel of salvation, through Christ, is the same both before and after the crucifixion. And in it all, “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.”
Christian Crossword

Across
3. Silversmith at Ephesus who made silver shrines for Diana
5. He was a leader of David’s choir
9. The third son of Aaron
10. What caused displeasure of God in the wilderness
13. A rapid and highly poisonous snake
15. A Syrian commander cured of leprosy in the Jordan River
17. The great annual day of humiliation and expiation for Israel
20. Price paid for a wife
21. He had his vineyard stolen by King Ahab
24. The prince of the power of the air
25. The Queen of Ahasuerus who was deposed
26. An alloy of copper and zinc
27. The god of the Philistines at Ekron
28. The chief city of Cilicia
29. Name by which God revealed Himself to the ancient Hebrews

Down
1. The husband of Salome and father of James and John
2. An Edomite that was chief overseer of Saul’s flocks
3. An instrument of war—a light spear
4. A dye obtained by the Egyptians from shellfish
6. A staff or rod that was a symbol of authority
7. The king of Sodom when invaded by four kings
8. He decreed that the world should be taxed
11. A town on the boundary between Ephraim and Benjamin
12. A special badge of God’s chosen people
14. She was bribed by the Philistines to find the secret of Samson’s strength
16. He permitted Nehemiah to return and rebuild Jerusalem
18. They were untouched by the razor from their birth
19. A famous pasture ground where Joseph found his brethren watching their flocks
22. He went from the land of Shinar and built Nineveh
23. Abigail was initially this man’s wife

Answers from Christian Crossword published in the May 2013 issue of Our Firm Foundation

Volume 28, Number 6
Would you like to get more fruit in your diet? Tired of wasting money on fruit that goes bad before you get “a chance to eat it” if so, try Fruitilicious! Our amazing nutrient-rich Fruitilicious is PACKED with fruits, berries, and a variety of nutrients! Fruitilicious is delicious AND nutritious. With only 16 calories per scoop, you can enjoy all the benefits of the power-packed nutrient blend without worrying about your waistline!

Fruitilicious

Of all the fruit and vegetables that you can eat, as far as nutrients go, berries beat them all. Berries, more than any other food, are associated with a remarkably long list of health benefits. This is why we included as many berries as we could squeeze in the bottle, including: blackberries, black currants, black raspberries, blueberries, cherries, gogi berries, pomegranates (yes, they’re considered a berry), strawberries and bilberries! How often do you get all of THOSE in your diet?!

The pigments that give berries their beautiful blue and red hues are also good for your health! Berries contain a giant portion of phytochemicals and flavonoids that have proven to help prevent many health conditions!

It is recommended that we should be eating at least 5 pieces of fruit every day in order to gain the full health benefits of eating fruit. Are you getting this much? Need some help? Try Fruitilicious!

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Letter to Clark Floyd from the National Catholic Register dated May 1, 2013:

Dear Clark Floyd,

Fighting Coercion

Coercion is the practice of forcing another party into involuntary action. In the case of the Church, when that involuntary action is intrinsically evil, we cannot and must not bow. The history of the people of God reveals that when his people stand their ground, God provides. This doesn’t mean that the courageous always have it easy. But God makes himself known to them in ways that the coward or the bystander will never know.

All around us are examples of how the world has seemingly become almost bankrupt of virtue. We have seen example after painful example of the long fight we have ahead of us in bringing heaven, hope and healing to the world through the teachings of God’s Word. Our courage and hope come from knowing we have the Lord faithfully at our side as we press on.

At the Register, we work tirelessly to expose the constant threats against the Church, against God’s people, against you and your family. There are those in the government who see faithful Catholics as obstacles to social “progress”. There are even threats that arise from within the Church—that chip away, deny, and tear down the work of God in and through the Magisterium and the work of the faithful.

Ultimately, there are only a handful of entities like the Register that stand in the gap—that shed light on the good, and the beautiful—and expose the works of darkness as they seek to destroy us.

Editor’s Note: This seems like it could have been a letter from our own church - How will these people react when they can no longer see their church as the persecuted, but instead as the persecutor? I save this type of correspondence to use when Sunday legislation is on the agenda - I pray that there will be faithful Catholics that will still stand for religious liberty.
With summer weather around the corner, many people want to shed those extra pounds they may have put on through the winter holiday/hibernation season. Or maybe the warmer weather is giving you the extra pep in your step that you needed to get out and start exercising again. Whatever the case may be, many people have a few extra pounds they need to release and today we're going to talk about some foods that can help you do it! It's true: Certain foods have a very high thermogenic effect, so you literally burn calories as you chew! Others contain nutrients and compounds that stoke your metabolic fire!

Each one of the following fat-burning foods is clinically proven to promote weight loss. These foods go a step beyond simply being fat-free, they possess special properties that add zip to your system and help your body melt away unhealthy pounds. These incredible fat burning foods can suppress your appetite for junk food and keep your body running smoothly with clean fuel and efficient energy.

Including any of these foods in your healthy eating plan will give your body the extra metabolic kick that it needs to shave off weight quickly. Hunger is satisfied more completely by filling the stomach, and ounce for ounce, the foods listed below accomplish that better than any others. At the same time, they're rich in nutrients and possess special fat-melting talents!

### Apples
These marvels of nature deserve their reputation for keeping the doctor away when you eat one a day. And now, it seems, they can help you melt the fat away too. First of all, they elevate your blood glucose (sugar) levels in a safe, gentle manner and keep them up longer than most foods. The practical effect of this is to leave you feeling satisfied longer, say researchers. Secondly, they're one of the richest sources of soluble fiber in the supermarket. This type of fiber prevents hunger pangs by guarding against dangerous swings or drops in your blood sugar level, says Dr. James Anderson of the University of Kentucky's School of Medicine.

An average size apple provides only 81 calories and has no sodium, saturated fat or cholesterol. You'll also get the added health benefits of lowering the level of cholesterol already in your blood as well as lowering your blood pressure.

### Barley
This filling grain has only 170 calories per cooked cup, respectable levels of protein and fiber and is relatively low fat. It is said that Roman gladiators ate this grain regularly for strength and actually complained when they had to eat meat! Studies at the University of Wisconsin show that barley effectively lowers cholesterol by up to 15 percent and has powerful anti-cancer agents. Israeli scientists say it cures constipation better than laxatives - and that it can promote weight loss, too. Use it as a substitute for rice in salads, pilaf or stuffing, or add to soups and stews. You can also mix it with rice for an interesting texture. Ground into flour, it makes excellent breads and muffins.

### Berries
Berries are the perfect weight-loss food! These tasty little gems have natural fructose sugar that satisfies your longing for sweets and enough fiber so you absorb fewer calories that you eat. British researchers found that the high content of insoluble fiber in fruits, vegetables and whole grains reduces the absorption of calories from foods enough to promote weight loss without hampering nutrition. Berries are also a great source of potassium that can assist you in blood pressure control. Blackberries have 74 calories per cup, blueberries 81, raspberries 60 and strawberries 45. So use your imagination and enjoy the berry of your choice!

### Broccoli
Contrary to what many believe, according to a recent poll, broccoli is America's favorite vegetable! No wonder. A cup of cooked broccoli has a mere 44 calories, yet it delivers a staggering nutritional payload and is considered the number one cancer-fighting vegetable! It has no fat, loads of fiber, cancer fighting chemicals called indoles, carotene, and 21 times
the RDA of vitamin C and calcium! When you’re buying broccoli, pay attention to the color. The tiny florets should be rich green and free of yellowing. Stems should be firm.

**Cabbage**

This Eastern Europe staple is a true wonder food. There are only 33 calories in a cup of cooked shredded cabbage, and it retains most of its nutritional goodness no matter how long you cook it. Eating cabbage raw (18 calories per shredded cup), cooked, as sauerkraut (27 calories per drained cup) or coleslaw (calories depend on dressing) only once a week is enough to protect against colon cancer! And it may be a longevity-enhancing food. Surveys in the United States, Greece and Japan show that people who eat a lot of it have the least colon cancer and the lowest death rates overall.

**Carrots**

What list of health-promoting, fat-fighting foods would be complete without Bugs Bunny’s favorite? A medium-sized carrot contains only about 55 calories and is a nutritional powerhouse. The orange color comes from beta-carotene, a powerful cancer-preventing nutrient (provitamin A). Chop and toss them with pasta, grate them into rice or add them to a stir-fry. Add finely chopped carrots to soups and spaghetti sauce, they impart a natural sweetness without adding sugar. Or for a super nutritional boost, try juicing them! Carrots make a delicious and healthy juice!

**Figs**

Fiber-rich figs are low in calories at 37 per medium (2.25” diameter) raw fig and 48 per dried fig. A recent study by the USDA demonstrated that they contribute to a feeling of fullness and prevent overeating. Subjects actually complained of being asked to eat too much food when fed a diet containing more figs than a similar diet with an identical number of calories. Serve them with other fruits or puree them to use as a filling for cookies and low-calorie pastries!

**Ginger**

Ginger root and ginger root supplements work directly with the gastrointestinal system, according to the University of Michigan Health System. They may assist in strengthening the intestinal and stomach walls, which may lead to improved digestion and waste excretion. In turn, you may experience weight loss due to improved digestive functionality. Ginger may also boost your energy levels, which can then be used for increased exercise or physical activity! Australia’s “Sunday Telegraph” called ginger an “edible amphetamine” that can boost metabolism by as much as 20 percent!! The newspaper said that imbibing ginger in tea form or adding it as a culinary spice in sweet and savory dishes can also limit your body’s fat accumulation. Ginger dilates blood vessels and produces body heat in ways similar to garlic, cayenne pepper, cinnamon, mustard and curries. So next time you want a hot beverage, make some ginger tea and help your pounds melt away!

**Grapefruit**

There’s good reason to add this traditional diet food to your regular diet. It helps dissolve fat and cholesterol, according to Dr. James Cerd of the University of Florida. An average sized grapefruit has 74 calories, delivers a whopping 15 grams of pectin (the special fiber linked to
lowering cholesterol and fat), is high in vitamin C and potassium and is free of fat and sodium. It’s rich in natural galacturonic acid, which adds to its potency as a fat and cholesterol fighter. The additional benefit here is assistance in the battle against arteriosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) and the development of heart disease. Try sprinkling it with cinnamon rather than sugar to take away some of the tart taste!

Greens

We’re talking collard, chicory, beet, kale, mustard, Swiss chard and turnip greens. They all belong to the same family as spinach, and that’s one of the super-stars. No matter how hard you try, you can’t load a cup of plain cooked greens with any more than 50 calories. They’re full of fiber, loaded with vitamins A and C, and free of fat. You can use them in salads, soups, casseroles or any dish where you would normally use spinach. Toss them in the juicer with some lemon, cucumber, celery, and ginger, for a nutritious and low-fat natural energy drink!!

Lentils

One-cup packs 37% of your daily iron needs—good news, since up to 20% of us are iron-deficient. When you lack a nutrient, your metabolism slows because the body’s not getting what it needs to work efficiently, says Tammy Lakatos Shames, RD, co-author of The Secret to Skinny. A dieter’s dream, lentils contain 230 calories, 0.4 grams of fat, and 0 grams of cholesterol per one-cup serving. Highly nutritious, in one serving, lentils also contain 16 grams fiber, 18 grams protein, 64 mg choline, 37 mg. calcium, 6.6 mg. iron, 71 mg. magnesium, 356 mg phosphorus, and 731 mg. potassium!! Unlike beans, lentils require no presoaking or overnight soaking. As a rule of thumb, use 1-1/2 cups of water to 1 cup of lentils. Approximately 20-30 minutes of cooking time will suffice. Starving college students take note! A one-pound package of lentils almost always costs less than one dollar, and usually around 70 cents.

Lettuce

People think lettuce is nutritionally worthless, but nothing could be farther from the truth! You can’t leave it out of your weight-loss plans, not at 10 calories per cup of raw romaine! It provides a lot of filling bulk for so few calories. And it’s full of vitamin C, too. Go beyond iceberg lettuce with Boston, bibb and romaine varieties or try watercress, arugula, radicchio, dandelion greens, purslane and even parsley to liven up your salads.

Melons

Now, here’s great taste and great nutrition in a low-calorie package! One cup of cantaloupe or honeydew pieces has 62 calories and one cup of watermelon pieces has 49 calories. They have some of the highest fiber content of any food and are delicious. Add the handsome quantities of vitamins A and C plus a whopping 547 mgs. of potassium in that cup of cantaloupe, and you have a fat-burning health food beyond compare.

Onions

Flavorful, aromatic, inexpensive and low in calories, onions deserve a regular place in your diet. One cup of chopped raw onions has only 60 calories, and one raw medium onion has just 42. They control cholesterol, thin the blood, protect against bad cholesterol, boost immune response, and may have some value in counteracting allergic reactions. Most of all, onions taste good and they’re good for you. Add raw to salads and sandwiches, or peel and bake, basting with olive oil and lemon juice.

Spinach

Popeye really knew what he was talking about, according to Dr. Richard Shekelle, an epidemiologist at the University of Texas. Spinach has the ability to lower cholesterol, rev up the metabolism and burn away fat. Rich in iron, beta-carotene and vitamins C and E, it supplies most of the nutrients you need.

Sweet Potatoes

You can make a meal out of them and not worry about gaining a pound, and you sure won’t walk away from the table feeling hungry. Each sweet potato has about 103 calories. Their creamy orange flesh is one of the best sources of vitamin A you can consume. You can bake or steam them, add them to casseroles, soups and many other dishes, or even juice them! Flavor with honey, lemon juice, or vegetable broth instead of butter.

Tomatoes

A medium tomato (2.5" diameter) has only about 25 calories. These garden delights are low in fat and sodium, high in potassium and rich in fiber. A survey at Harvard Medical School found that the chances of dying of cancer are lowest among people who eat tomatoes (or strawberries) every week. And don’t overlook canned crushed, peeled, whole or stewed tomatoes. They make sauces, casseroles and soups taste great while retaining their nutritional goodness and low-calorie status. Even plain old spaghetti sauce is a fat-burning bargain, especially when
served over zucchini pasta, so think about introducing tomatoes into your diet!

**Water**

Although not a “food”, don’t forget to drink water (half of your body weight in ounces each day). Not only will this help reduce hunger pangs and cravings, but it will keep your skin soft and supple, your muscles hydrated and help them to recover faster, and will give you an energy boost! Don’t drink all your calories in soda, sweet drinks, coffee-drinks, and the like, sipping on water is calorie-free and doesn’t have all of the nasty side-effects of drinking these other beverages!

**Organic vs. Traditional Produce**

Just a little note about organic food: People always ask if it really matters if it is organic, or if they really need to wash their produce. Trust me, I used to be one of those people who would grab and apple and kind of wipe it off a bit and then eat it. But now I know better! If it’s not organic, I make sure and wash it off really well before eating it. I recently read this (below) on NaturalNews.com and just had to share it with you. I think it’s a great illustration of why organic is better (and why if you can’t get organic that you should definitely WASH your produce very, very well!!).

“If I sprayed your salad with some “RAID” roach killer right now, just a little bit right on the lettuce and maybe a little more on the tomatoes, would you still eat it all, and just assume your body will simply filter out those “small amounts” of toxins? Better yet, what if I paid for it, a nice big, tasty, “bug killer” salad that you could even take outside and no bugs would bother you at all, would you eat it? How about this: If I sprayed a quick shot of some Raid ant killer into your orange juice or your apple juice right in front of you, would you drink it, especially if you’d save 25 cents on every drink you drank from now on?

What if most vegetables, fruits, and fruit juice drinks were sold that way, and cheaper than the “Non-Raid” food, would you still buy them? Wouldn’t that pay off for you in the long run? GMO means food and medicine are genetically modified, with bacteria and sometimes with viruses, or with weed killer, worm killer, bug killer and people killer. This “pesticide food” is well planned out and has been for decades.”

Most people buy “traditionally grown” produce these days and don’t give it much thought. But what if those chemicals were sprayed on your food right in front of you? Would you be a little more thorough in your washing? Or would you pay the extra 50 cents to make sure you’re getting the chemical-free version? Now I know that not everyone can afford organic produce, but keep an eye out because sometimes the organic is the same price as the traditionally grown and you can find some good deals. And if you can’t, make sure you’re washing your produce well so that you can gain all of the benefits listed above (and for the past few months) without adding more toxic waste that your body will have to remove later! Shop around for the best prices, contact local farmers, or talk with your local friendly produce manager and see where you can save!

http://www.naturalnews.com/037621_GMO_side_effects_cancer.html#ixzz2A957hy7a
Home

By Julia Colegrove

I would not shrink from tangled ways,
Though thorns may pierce my feet;
I would not lay my burdens down,
Till life’s work is complete.

But oh, blest mansions rise so fair
Before my tearful eyes,
I half forget the darksome vale
‘Tween me and Paradise.

I know my armor must be on;
There’s use for sword and shield;
But home and rest are sweeter than
This dusty battle field.

And I am told that earth renewed
Shall be our dwelling place;
And God’s own hand shall wipe away
The tears from every face.

The hands now laid o’er forms of clay
Shall be in mine once more;
The ties that bind us each to each
Be stronger than before.

The voices hushed shall sing for joy;
The scattered ones shall meet,
And praise for aye the Lord of life
And worship at his feet.
Did you know that the vitamin and dietary supplement industry is a multi-billion dollar industry? And the companies that produce the vitamins and supplements are trying to make every cent count. Anything they can do to shave a penny off of their cost, they do. Unfortunately, quite often it’s the customer who suffers. One major cost-cutting method used today is simply using synthetic ingredients rather than whole-food based ingredients. But not us!

Mega-Multi contains a plethora of “whole-food” ingredients. Whole-foods are the ONE SURE option for the body’s use and metabolism. When vitamins and minerals come from natural sources, it is much easier for your body to absorb and assimilate the nutrients. You WILL feel the difference!

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- Vitamin D2
- Vitamin E
- Vitamin C
- Vitamin B1
- Vitamin B2
- Vitamin B3
- Vitamin B5
- Vitamin B6
- Vitamin B12
- Vitamin H
- Vitamin M
- Bioflavonoids
- Para Amino Benzoic Acid

**Minerals:**
- Calcium
- Magnesium
- Potassium
- Iodine (kelp)
- Zinc
- Manganese
- Chromium
- Selenium
- Phosphorous

**Herbs:**
- Kola Nut
- Ginger Root
- Cayenne
- Yellow Dock
- Fo-Ti
- Alfalfa Concentrate
- Aloe Vera
- Ginkgo Biloba
- Dandelion
- Shiitake
- Goldenseal
- Echinacea

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- Papain
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- Betaine HCL
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- Lipase
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**Do You Even Need Vitamins and Minerals?**
- According to Dr. Robert Fletcher and Dr. Kathleen Fairfield of Harvard University, it now appears that people who get enough vitamins may have a lower risk of many common chronic illnesses.
- In 1936, a government paper known as Senate Document #264 stated that more than 99% of Americans are deficient in the critical minerals that are required for the maintenance of a healthy body. This paper stated; “It is bad news to learn from our leading authorities that 99 percent of the American people are deficient in minerals. A marked deficiency in any one of the more important minerals actually results in disease. Any upset of the balance, any considerable lack of one or another element, however microscopic the body requirement may be, and we sicken, suffer, shorten our lives.”

*These statements have not been evaluated by the FDA. This product is not intended to prevent, diagnose, treat, or cure any disease.*
I was pointed down to the time when the third angel's message was closing. The power of God had rested upon His people; they had accomplished their work and were prepared for the trying hour before them. They had received the latter rain, or refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and the living testimony had been revived. The last great warning had sounded everywhere, and it had stirred up and enraged the inhabitants of the earth who would not receive the message.

I saw Jesus throw down the censer
I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven. An angel with a writer's inkhorn by his side returned from the earth and reported to Jesus that his work was done, and the saints were numbered and sealed. Then I saw Jesus, who had been ministering before the ark containing the ten commandments, throw down the censer. He raised His hands, and with a loud voice said, “It is done.” And all the angelic host laid off their crowns as Jesus made the solemn declaration, “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”

Every case had been decided for life or death
While Jesus had been ministering in the sanctuary, the judgment had been going on for the righteous dead, and then for the righteous living. Christ had received His kingdom, having made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The subjects of the kingdom were made up. The marriage of the Lamb was consummated. And the kingdom, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, was given to Jesus and the heirs of salvation, and Jesus was to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords.

For a time the saints live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor
As Jesus moved out of the most holy place, I heard the tinkling of the bells upon His garment; and as He left, a cloud of darkness covered the inhabitants of the earth. There was then no mediator between guilty man and an offended God. While Jesus had been standing between God and guilty man, a restraint was upon the people; but when He stepped out from between man and the Father, the restraint was removed and Satan had entire control of the finally impenitent. It was impossible for the plagues to be poured out while Jesus officiated in the sanctuary; but as His work there is finished, and His intercession closes, there is nothing to stay the wrath of God, and it breaks with fury upon the shelterless head of the guilty sinner, who has slighted salvation and hated reproof. In that fearful time, after the close of Jesus' mediation, the saints were living in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. Every case was decided, every jewel numbered. Jesus tarried a moment in the outer apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, and the sins which had been confessed while He was in the most holy place were placed upon Satan, the originator of sin, who must suffer their punishment.
Many desired life, but made no effort to obtain it. Then I saw Jesus lay off His priestly attire and clothe Himself with His most kingly robes. Upon His head were many crowns, a crown within a crown. Surrounded by the angelic host, He left heaven. The plagues were falling upon the inhabitants of the earth. Some were denouncing God and cursing Him. Others rushed to the people of God and begged to be taught how they might escape His judgments. But the saints had nothing for them. The last tear for sinners had been shed, the last agonizing prayer offered, the last burden borne, the last warning given. The sweet voice of mercy was no more to invite them. When the saints, and all heaven, were interested for their salvation, they had no interest for themselves. Life and death had been set before them. Many desired life, but made no effort to obtain it. They did not choose life, and now there was no atoning blood to cleanse the guilty, no compassionate Saviour to plead for them, and cry, “Spare, spare the sinner a little longer.” All heaven had united with Jesus, as they heard the fearful words, “It is done. It is finished.” The plan of salvation had been accomplished, but few had chosen to accept it. And as mercy’s sweet voice died away, fear and horror seized the wicked. With terrible distinctness they heard the words, “Too late! too late!”

There is a famine in the land for hearing the words of the Lord

Those who had not prized God’s Word were hurrying to and fro, wandering from sea to sea, and from the north to the east, to seek the Word of the Lord. Said the angel, “They shall not find it. There is a famine in the land; not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but for hearing the words of the Lord. What would they not give for one word of approval from God! but no, they must hunger and thirst on. Day after day have they slighted salvation, prize earthly riches and earthly pleasure higher than any heavenly treasure or inducement. They have rejected Jesus and despised His saints. The filthy must remain filthy forever.”

It was a scene of fearful agony

Many of the wicked were greatly enraged as they suffered the effects of the plagues. It was a scene of fearful agony. Parents were bitterly reproaching their children, and children their parents, brothers their sisters, and sisters their brothers. Loud, wailing cries were heard in every direction, “It was you who kept me from receiving the truth which would have saved me from this awful hour.”

The people turned upon their ministers with bitter hate and reproached them, saying, “You have not warned us. You told us that all the world was to be converted, and cried, Peace, peace, to quiet every fear that was aroused. You have not told us of this hour; and those who warned us of it you declared to be fanatics and evil men, who would ruin us.” But I saw that the ministers did not escape the wrath of God. Their suffering was tenfold greater than that of their people.

EW 279
"He who constantly depends upon God through simple trust and prayerful confidence will be surrounded by the angels of heaven." - IHP 16

"He shall give his angels charge over thee...They shall bear thee up in their hands." - Psalms 91: 11,12