

Christ is Victor

JAN/FEB 1998

“A Word To Ponder”

God's Ways are not Our Ways

Isa 55:8-9: For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thought. As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

I'm increasingly aware that without understanding the fact that the Lord's ways are just different from our ways, we can get in trouble in a hurry. Can we yield to His ways? What do we need to know about His ways so that we can yield, and so that we can walk in His blessing and purpose for our life? Our pastor in Seattle frequently uses an illustration in his sermons that basically says, "Who are you that you know more than God? How long has your pea-sized brain been alive that it has everything figured out, maybe 20 or 30 or 40 years? What's that in comparison to God the Creator, who has always been? How did you get so smart so fast?"

We keep trying to figure it all out in our human understanding. The reality is that no matter how long we live, we're just not going to "figure it out" or fully understand His ways!

As I look back in my own life, I marvel at God's way in sending us to Taiwan and Asia 13 years ago. At that point we had no concept of "Unreached People

Groups". Our mission was working only in Africa, with little vision for Asia. Mary is fluent in and I have a working knowledge of Spanish. We had thought that we might go to Latin America. Instead He asked us to struggle with Chinese!! In sending us to the Orient, He opened up a whole new world to us.

I'm increasingly aware that God's ways are just "different" from my thinking. I'd better pay attention to "how He works"!

You See, in the Kingdom of God..

A few months ago, Mary heard a missionary from Cambodia share on *Focus on the Family* and ordered me the tape to listen to -- in fact we thought of getting copies for everyone on the field. One part of what he shared really jumped out at me:

You see, in the Kingdom of God everything is opposites, everything.

Now catch this.

See, you die to live, you are last to be first, you give to receive.

God takes the weak things to confound the strong and the foolish things to confound the wise.

God takes the things that Satan meant for evil and He turns them over and He uses them for Good.

God uses what happens in our lives for a purpose.

Everything is Opposites- You Die to Live

John 12:20. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the

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True Prayer

Ezra 5:1-17 & 6:1-13

“And thus they returned us answer saying, we are the servants of the God of heaven and earth, and build the house that was builded these many years ago, which a great king of Israel builded and set up. But after that our fathers had provoked the God of heaven unto wrath, he gave them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, the Chaldean, who destroyed this house, and carried the people away into Babylon.” The people who began to build the house of God were able to acknowledge their faults. When we approach our enemies, it is good to acknowledge our faults. A sense of guilt which goes deep into our consciousness and every aspect of our thinking is good. These people confessed that their fathers provoked God. We should acknowledge our parents' sins. Sometimes we have to confess the sins of our children and then pray for them. God accepts such prayer.

Lamentations 2:14. “Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee and they have not discovered thine iniquity.”

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Gold- A Bad Life-Preserver

How many are worshipping gold today! Where war has slain its thousands, gold has slain its millions. Its history is the history of slavery and oppression in all ages. At this moment, what an empire it has! The spirit of greed even tries to turn the globe itself into gold.

Tarpeia, the daughter of the governor of the fortress situated on the Capitoline Hill in Rome, was captivated with the golden bracelets of the Sabine soldiers, and she agreed to let them into the fortress if they would give her what they wore on their left arms. The contract was made; the Sabines kept their promise. Tatius, their commander, was the first to deliver his bracelets and shield. The coveted treasures were thrown on Tarpeia by each of the soldiers until she sank beneath their weight and died. Thus does the weight of gold carry many people downward.

The worthlessness of gold for which so many are striving, is illustrated by a story that Dr. Arnott, the Scottish physician, used to tell.

A ship carrying a company of emigrants has been driven from her course and wrecked on a desert island, far from man's reach. There is no way of escape but they have a good stock of food. The ocean surrounds them, but they have plenty of seeds, fine soil and sunshine, so there is no danger. Before the

plans are laid, an exploring party discovers a gold mine. The whole party goes to dig there. They labour day after day and month after month. They get large heaps of gold. But spring is past, and not a field has been cleared, not a grain of seed put into the ground.

The summer comes and their wealth increases but their stock of food grows small. In the fall, they find that the heaps of gold are worthless. Famine stares them in the face. They rush to the woods, chop down the trees, dig up the roots, till the ground, sow the seed. It is too late! Winter has come and their seeds rot in the ground. They die of want in the midst of their treasures.

“The coveted treasures were thrown on Tarpeia by each of the soldiers until she sank beneath their weight and died.”

The earth is like the island and eternity is like the ocean around it. We have been cast on the island's shore. There is a living seed, but the gold mines attract us. We spend spring and summer there; winter overtakes us in our toil, and we are without the Bread of Life. We are lost. Let us who are Christians value even more the home which holds the treasures that no one can take away.

-D.L. Moody

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man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

Mark 8:35. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.

Throughout the entire Bible, Jesus gives the example of dying to live. John 10:11- *I am the Good Shepherd*. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. And He did exactly that -- he laid down his life for us!

A few weeks ago Keith, Kurt and myself met with representatives from a church in California that is looking to adopt a people group. After Keith presented the needs of a Muslim group, the reaction was that the job sounded so hard, so difficult. Kurt had a valuable insight. “We don't want to remember that it takes sacrifice. Africa is 50% Christian today, but we don't like to remember that the early missionaries literally carried their coffins with them. The graves of the early pioneers are scattered in China -- the seed was sown, always at a price.”

Unreached peoples will not be reached without a price -- it does and will cost. Have we learned this? Are we willing to die to our own ambitions and dreams, and to reach out at all costs for God's purpose for our lives? Nothing can compare: no amount of worldly success, no amount of \$'s, no fleeting fame, and no thrills that the world has to offer.

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This Fellowship is an inter-denominational missionary and prayer group working for revival in churches and amongst students in several countries. We invite every layperson to become God's ally in changing his or her corner of the world. We train people in evangelistic work and to be self-supporting missionaries.

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God's ways are not our ways- as we die, we live!

Everything is Opposites- The Last shall be First

Mark 9:35- Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all."

Mark 10:31- I tell you the truth, Jesus replied. "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields -- and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.

In John 13, Jesus girded himself with a towel and washed the feet of the disciples, then explained in vs. 15-16: "*I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.*"

God is not calling us to promote ourselves or even our vision as an organization. He is not calling many of us to public positions of leadership. He is calling us to serve His church and unreached peoples in many small ways. He is calling us to be faithful in the little things: to be faithful sometimes in preparing the soil and even in picking up the stones in the field. He is calling us to partner with and encourage others - - all with a servant's heart. He's calling us to follow Christ's example as he girded himself with a towel and washed the feet of his disciples.

Some of you are laboring in fields where you get little credit or public recognition. Sometimes you wonder if your family, your home church, or if the folks in the Seattle office have any idea what you are doing and how you are serving. Sometimes you ask, "I must be doing something wrong. People don't care that I've given up so much to come to this country. I don't know if I'm making a difference." Encourage yourselves with Mark 10:31.

One of the heaviest burdens or responsibilities I now feel in the Seattle office is to be part of making good decisions about candidate applications. Increasingly I'm aware that it's not the education or experience, or even spiritual gifting that is important. What makes a successful missionary has more to do with your ability to be flexible, to get along with others, and to go prepared to put on the towel and wash the feet of others. What warns of failure is someone who comes with all the answers, looking for a place of recognition.

Let me share a personal perspective. In 1969, I graduated from the University of Massachusetts with an MBA degree and had several opportunities to go into the world of corporate America. Yet, I sensed that wasn't what God had for me, and I knew that missions was to be a part of my life some time and in some way. After taking three months on a short-term missions trip to Jamaica and South America, God clearly sent me back home to Topeka, Kansas to help my father in a small business. A few years earlier he had started an industrial waste removal (trash) company as a sideline, and he had just bought a competitor and needed help. So I took on the management of that company and found myself some days on the back of a garbage truck. No, I didn't tell a lot of people that I was a recent MBA graduate. Thanks be to God that I was willing to obey and to serve in that way. The result of three years of managing that company was quick growth, business success, and experiences that have shaped my life. The end result was the sale of the company to a new start-up public company, Waste Management, Inc., now widely recognized as the leading waste removal and landfill business in the world. My point here: those three years not only shaped my life, but they provided to a large extent a financial basis that to this day has helped us serve in missions. I wouldn't be where I am today without that start, that experience, and without a willingness to begin a career on the back of a garbage truck.

God's ways are not our ways -- the last shall be first!

Say What?

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

- Proverbs 1:7

Everything is Opposites- Receiving from Giving

Matthew 10:42- And if anyone gives up a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth, he will certainly not lose his reward.

Luke 6:38- Give and it shall be given unto you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

What do we give? Our mission statements says that we invest (give).. our gifts, resources and vocational skills. God has given us many things, has given us control over those things and then asks us, "What do you want to do with what I've given you? Are we willing to invest these things in Kingdom work?"

We invest that we do well -- our gifts. We use them to give Him glory.

We invest our resources. That can mean giving up the right to receive something we think we deserve, including a good salary. We don't always know what God is going to require of us -- our home equity, our car, our right to life insurance and retirement benefits, etc -- but we've put these resources on the altar.

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uity, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment." Misleading prophets were the main cause of the ruin of Jerusalem. Hananiah prophesied false peace to them. Jeremiah wept and let tears run down like a river because of the destruction of the daughter of his people. The true prophet was imprisoned and false prophecy was accepted in the land. When the prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem was fulfilled Jeremiah lamented. The king and the princes were so proud that they would not allow any truth to approach them. Pride which does not allow us to acknowledge our sins is a terrible thing. At conversion this pride begins to leave us. It does not however leave us completely. It shows up time and again. When pride leaves us completely, grace begins to operate abundantly.

"Without obedience no blessing is possible."

The true exercises of prayer are very efficacious. It permeates every cell of your being. To listen to a good prayer is a great blessing. By sin our minds have been spoiled so that our minds are in opposition to God's. Ezra 6:10 "That they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons." Pharaoh also asked Moses to bless him. How was it possible? Without obedience no blessing is possible. Would to God we could obey His Word. We should learn to dive deep into the depths of prayer to rescue others.

God has been very good to us. God's nature is to love us and bless us. By transgressing His Word we go into danger. Lamentations 5:7 "Our fathers have sinned, and are not; and we have borne their iniquities." Let us give ourselves to prayer. Prayer will never go in vain. Since it is essential to acknowledge our sins it is good to tell our own people the truth of God lovingly. Let us acknowledge before God the powerless and fruitless life we are living. A prophet is one whose lips and heart are perfectly in harmony with the heart of God. Would to God we were of such oneness of mind with Jesus!

- Late Mr. N. Daniel

And we invest our vocational skills that are needed in developing countries where unreached peoples are located.

As we give, we receive must from God. That's a promise. Oh, how to describe the wonders of His blessings to and care for us. Mark 10:31 and Luke 6:38 say it so well.

God's ways are not our ways -- as you give, you receive!

God Takes the Weak Things to Confound the Strong and the Foolish Things to Confound the Wise

I Corinthians 1:27-30 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong.

II Corinthians 12:10 That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Is that your experience-I bet it is, for it is mine. As I look back to my times of greatest weakness and times of greatest needs, that is when God stepped in. The world considers the path that you and I have chosen to follow as foolish. If you haven't been called a fool to your face, be assured that many call you that when you're thousands of miles away. Press on, for the world, including your family, will never understand His hand on your life!

God's ways are not our ways -- He takes your weaknesses and your foolishness and turns them into precious stones!

And God Takes the Things that Satan Meant for Evil and He Turns Them Over and He Uses Them for Good

The Bible is full of stories about how God takes the darts of the enemy and turns them into good. We remember the story of Joseph sold into slavery in Egypt, the story of the Cross itself, the scattering of the church from Jerusalem, and many more. Do you have experiences in your life that God has turned around for good? I sure do-

experiences that gives us an understanding of those we serve so much better and a deeper walk with Him. As I look back on the darkest times, I now see a glimmer of the purpose for the present and the future -- what God has turned around for good.

God's ways are not our ways -- He uses all things for good in our lives!

God Uses What Happens in Our Lives for a Purpose

With confidence we know that everything that happens in our lives, He will use for His purpose. We can count on it!!!

God's ways are not our ways. He has chosen to work through sinful man and human weakness for the greatest need in history- that those who have not heard can hear. The fields are ready for harvest. Be encouraged!

-David Hupp

Weekly Meetings — Welcome to All —

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at 10:00 am
Ann Arbor YMCA, Zonta Room, 1st floor
Call (248) 486-6326

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Shortwave (Sundays at 2:15 pm, EST)
 WHRI 19 Metre band 15.355 MHz

Des Moines, IA: 1460 (KDMI) Sun. 10:30 & 1:45 am
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Chattanooga, TN: 1450 AM (WVOC) Sat. 3:30 pm
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