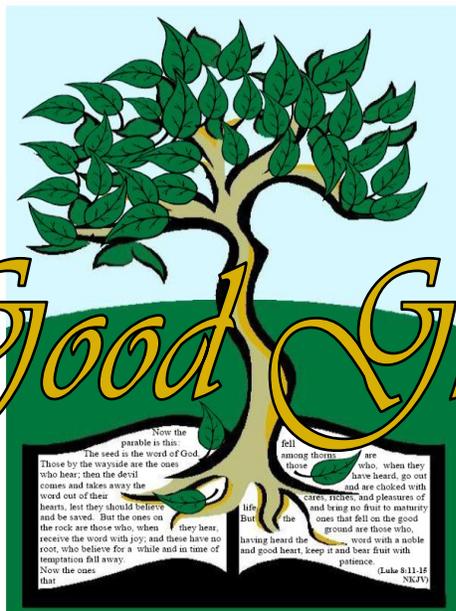


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Issue Four

On Good Ground



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No Fault in You

There are some in the body of Christ today who are struggling in trying to please God. They are putting so much pressure on themselves to “be good” that they are tying themselves in knots. Each failure, each time they fall short of the mark, guilt, condemnation and shame pay them a visit and hinders their walk with God. Over time, they begin to feel better about themselves, until their next misstep occurs, at which point the terrible guilt-cycle starts all over again. To all who have been there or who are there today, God brings good news: our Heavenly Father finds no fault in you.

This is not to say that you are living a perfect life – far from it. But your right standing with the Father is not determined by what you do, but rather by what Jesus has already done. Jesus lived a sinless life on earth (Hebrews 4:15) and when He shed His blood and died on Calvary’s cross He washed away forever the sins of those who believe in Him.

The writer of Hebrews, in speaking about the Old Testament system of animal sacrifice said, “For it is not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4 NLT). He then went on to share the good news of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross by stating that believers “are made holy by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all time. Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering

the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. But our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God’s right hand ... For by that one offering he forever made perfect those who are being made holy” (vv. 10-12, 14).

When Jesus offered His body and shed His blood at Calvary, He made a perfect sacrifice that took away our sins forever! This is why Paul joyfully declared, “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold all things are become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17 KJV). Paul went on to say, “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ ... For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (vv. 20a-21).

In Christ we are righteous, which means in right standing with God or, as the New Living Translation puts it, “made right with God.” This is entirely because of the sacrifice Jesus made for you and me over 2000 years ago. All we have to do is believe and accept Jesus’ atoning work on the cross.

Consider this: over 2000 years ago Jesus stood before Pontius Pilate, who cross-examined Him to determine if He had committed any crime worthy of death. After peppering Jesus with questions, Pilate went to the angry mob and declared, “I find in Him no fault at all” (John 18:38). That’s because, in

truth, there was and is no fault in Jesus! The Bible declares it again and again. And here’s the good news: if you are in Christ Jesus, if you are in a living, vibrant relationship with Him, then when God looks at you, He finds no fault in you, too!

Oh, the Lord is working on you, all right, smoothing out your rough edges and repairing any blemishes, but He finds no fault in you because when He looks at you He sees you covered with the robe of righteousness through Christ (Isaiah 61:10). So even when you and I miss it, we can rejoice, because “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Romans 8:1). Notice, the scripture does not say there *will be* no condemnation once you get your act together. It says there is no condemnation *NOW!*

So, beloved of God, keep following the leading of the Holy Spirit, who helps you live a life of glory according to the Word of God. Obey the Lord, not out of fear of being punished, but out of gratitude for His amazing grace and His wonderful gift of salvation through Christ Jesus. And remember, when the Father looks upon you, He sees His Son, Jesus. And just as the Father finds no fault in the Son, He also finds no fault in you. Every time you embrace this wonderful truth, lift up your hands wherever you are and give our God the glory!



Two Frogs in Some Milk

This is the story of two frogs. One frog was fat and the other skinny. One day, while searching for food, they inadvertently jumped into a vat of milk. They couldn't get out, as the sides were too slippery, so they were just swimming around. The fat frog said to the skinny frog, "Brother frog, there's no use paddling any longer. We're just going to drown, so we might as well give up." The skinny frog replied, "Hold on brother, keep paddling. Somebody will get us out." And they continued paddling for hours. After a while, the fat frog said, "Brother frog, there's no use. I'm becoming very tired now. I'm just going to stop paddling and drown. It's Sunday and nobody's working. We're doomed. There's no possible way out of here." But the skinny frog said, "Keep trying. Keep paddling. Something will happen, keep paddling." Another couple of hours passed. The fat frog said, "I can't go on any longer. There's no sense in doing it because we're going to drown anyway. What's the use?" And the fat frog stopped. He gave up. And he drowned in the milk. But the skinny frog kept on paddling. Just ten minutes later, the skinny frog felt something solid beneath his feet. He had churned the milk into butter and was able to hop out of the vat.

Simple story about believing. You may find yourself in something. Maybe not some milk, but more like some "mud." But as long as you keep on believing that something will come out of it, you will get out of it. Your deliverance is nigh, so never give up. In just a little while, you shall reap if you faint not. ☺



True or False. Every now and then it's good to return to basics. So here we have a true or false quiz from the book of Genesis. In the beginning... (if you're a Bible Scholar, you can still tell us the chapter and verse). ☺

1. The Tree of Life was located in the Garden of Eden.
 true false
2. When Cain fled after killing Abel, he went to the land of Nod.
 true false
3. Noah had three sons and three daughters.
 true false
4. God confused people's language at Babel.
 true false
5. Isaac and Ishmael had the same father.
 true false
6. Isaac met his wife Rebekah at a well.
 true false
7. Jacob had four wives.
 true false
8. Levi had a sister named Dinah.
 true false
9. Joseph was sold as a slave in Egypt.
 true false
10. Jacob never met his grandsons.
 true false

(Answers on next page)

SELAH.
Pause and calmly think
about these.



REFLECTION

...As a man thinketh, so is He.

IF WE SAY WE HAVE CONFIDENCE IN GOD, BUT DO NOT HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE THING, OR THE ABILITY THAT GOD GIVES US, WE REALLY DON'T HAVE CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

God cannot solve a problem that we refuse to acknowledge.

Happiness is NOT a fruit of the spirit, joy is. Don't worry about being happy, BE joyful.

Good ideas become God ideas when they start with Ohhhhh!

Patience (the ability to wait) is the capacity to accept or tolerate delay, trouble or suffering without getting angry or upset. How is yours?

It's not about what we know, but what we say and do with what we know.

When we are obedient to the Lord, we free His hands to move on our behalf.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD LED JESUS INTO THE WILDERNESS, THE WORD OF GOD LED HIM OUT.

The same power that forgives is the same power that heals.

REAL POWER COMES FROM BEING UNDER AUTHORITY RATHER THAN IN AUTHORITY.

Jesus did not release His power to heal the woman with the issue of blood. Her faith released it.

Once we believe the truth, we will not live the way we do.



The Prayer of Salvation

Father God, I come to You in the name of Jesus. Your Word says, 'Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved' I confess with my mouth Jesus as Lord of my life and believe in my heart that You raised Him from the dead. And I believe that I am saved just as You have said. Thank You for coming into my heart. In Jesus name, I pray. Amen.



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Have you shared the Good News yet?

"But the ones that fell on good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience." - Luke 8:15

Jesus Says

When we were kids, we used to play a game called "Simon Says." One of us would stand before the group as "Simon," and issue instructions that typically involved physical movements, like jumping up and down or touching your nose. The instructions were to be followed only if they were preceded by "Simon says." For example, "Simon says turn around." The object of the game was to trick or deceive the players into following an instruction that did not start with "Simon says." Whoever followed such an instruction was eliminated. Typically, "Simon" would rattle off instructions quickly: "Simon says do this. Simon says do this. Simon says do this. Do this." Whoever followed that last instruction was eliminated because "Simon" didn't issue it. As believers, we have the Holy Spirit living on the inside of us (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). One of the Spirit's functions is to guide us into all truth and He will instruct us only according to what He hears from Jesus (John 16:13). Throughout our day we will hear the Spirit leading: "Jesus say forgive him." "Jesus says call your mother." "Jesus says go to bed early tonight." In some ways, the Spirit is telling us, "Jesus says do this." Since the commandments of God are not burdensome (1 John 5:3), when we gladly obey the Spirit, things work out well. Yet in the midst of the instructions from the Holy Ghost, the devil will chime in with a "Do this." When he does, be careful not to follow that instruction because it may eliminate you from receiving God's best in that situation. Remember, each and every day, as children of God, we are to do only what Jesus says.



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By inspiration of The Holy Ghost.

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May the Lord God bless you in astonishing ways!
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