

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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Lord Lift Me Up!

By Steve Niemeier

The Lord told Moses in Genesis 13:14 after Lot had chosen to go to the area of Sodom and Gomorrah, ***“Lift up your eyes now and look from the place where you are...”***

Now we know that the Lord wanted Moses to look at the land that he would be given and certainly the Lord blessed Moses with all that he could see in all directions. Many times we fail to life up our eyes and see what the Lord has given us.

As the children of Israel were escaping the grasps of Pharaoh and the Egyptians they came face to face with the Red Sea. Doubting the power of God and complaining to Moses they were overcome with fear. Moses summons God and God tells him to ***“lift up his rod and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it.”*** (Exodus 14:16). How many times do we doubt the power of God and complain out of fear?

In Matthew 14:30-31 we find the exchange between Peter and Jesus. Peter and the other apostles saw Jesus walking on the water at night, the wind was contrary, the waves were rough and here is Jesus walking on the water as if nothing was going on. ***Peter tells Jesus if it is really you then command me to come to You on the water.***

You know the rest of the story don't you? Peter gets out of the boat and walks on the water and then loses his faith and sinks. Jesus reaches out his hand and lifts Peter up out of the water. Then he asks Peter ***“O you of little faith, why did you doubt?”*** So, how many of us have gotten wet because we had little faith?

There are times in this life that we cannot see what God has set before us because we only see the problems or troubles that we are struggling with. In other times of our lives we pray and it seems that the answer is not as we would have it and we begin to doubt the

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power of God. Then we complain and even become bitter about the situation. In our walk down this life and troubled waters seem to splash in our face at times when we think we have the faith to stay afloat. The next thing we know we are sinking in the waters full of high waves and fierce winds.

Where do we go to have our vision improved – our doubt healed – and our faith repaired? Where do we go when all else is failing? Where do we go when it seems all is lost? Where do we go when our knees are weak – our hands are sweaty – our hearts are broken – our appetite is lost and no one seems to understand?

Psalms 121:1-2 ***“I will lift up my eyes to the hills from whence comes my help? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.”*** What a comforting thought – the One who made all we can see of nature – the one who has the power to bring forth love and destruction – the one who sent His Son Jesus to lift us out of the world of sin and burdens that can drown us – He is the One the Psalmist says our help comes from.

Do you think God knows us? Jesus states in Matthew

10:30 that ***the very hairs of our head are numbered.*** Who numbered them? God did! Can you count them? Even one with a head such as mine which is mostly bald cannot count the hairs left on his head. Matthew 6:25-34 states that we should not worry for God knows what we need.

Lord lift me up! Let me have the sight to see your goodness and what you have given me. Lord lift me up! Let me overcome the fear that can beset me and recognize ***that I can do all things through your Son Jesus*** (Philippians 4:13). Lord lift me up! Let me stay focused in the study of your word to grow my faith and understand that when the troubled waters of life start to drown me that you can deliver me safely to the shore of salvation. Yes, Lord lift me up so that no matter what our adversary – the roaring lion called Satan throws at me I can find safety in your words and Lord let me be humble enough to recognize ***You are the only one who can lift me up and deliver me!***

We Learn More from Losing Things

by Gary Henry

“Better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting, for that is the end of all men; and the living will take it to heart” (Ecc 7:2).

To lose is to learn.

Rarely do we part with anything valuable without growing in wisdom. Yet the experience of loss is one we usually resist and resent. If it's a choice between gaining and losing, we'd much rather be gaining. As for any losing we might have to do, we hope to defer that as long as we can. Nevertheless it's true: we **learn** more from losing things than we do from gaining them. So Solomon said that it's better to go to the “house of mourning” than the “house of feasting.” That will be our perspective during times of loss if our priorities are what they ought to be.

We humans are both “acquisitive” and “possessive” creatures, aren't we? We love to acquire — to get and to gain — and having acquired at least some of what we want in this world, we feel a sense of entitlement to it: ***This is mine. I posses it. It would be wrong for this to ever be taken away from me.*** We are loathe to part

with anything we have acquired, whether our money, our possessions, our health, our pleasures, our privileges, or our relationships.

Yet in a “temporal” world, there is nothing that is not **temporary**. Do you understand what that means? It means that **there is nothing that is yours to keep**. Whatever you have, you are going to have to let go of it — except God. And I am not talking about what happens at death. If you live very long, you're going to part with most of what you enjoy **before** you die. And when the things you have cherished are taken away from you, one by one, you will grow in wisdom. You will learn more from losing things than you ever learned by gaining them. And what you will learn is that **God is all you have to have**. He is the only thing you can't do without.

If nothing ever changed and we were allowed to keep our situations and our relationships as long as we wanted, we'd soon forget about God. Our tendency is to try to “possess” the creation and pay little attention to the Creator. But knowing our nature, God lets us enjoy our boons and benefits **For a while** . . . and then takes them away from us. With every

loss, He is teaching us to fix our hearts on Him. So let me ask you: looking at life like that, is losing what you love in this world good or bad? **You be the judge.**

The Worldliness Series

By Steve Niemeier

We are in the middle of a series of lessons pertaining to worldliness. In 2005 we studied a series of lessons pertaining to worldliness. Bro. Donnie Rader several years ago prepared excellent material on this subject and we based the series in 2005 on some of his material. Bro. Don McClain also prepared some great material on worldliness and we have studied through some of his material to assist us with our present study.

These lessons are built to present to us the “silent issues” of worldliness that we may not think about on a daily basis. For instance our present study on decisions is challenging all of us on our everyday decisions that determine our destiny.

We have decided to present these lessons on Sunday morning until the series is finished. Then Bro. Dan Barker will be bringing us a series of **lessons pertaining to relationships**. He will do this on Sunday mornings also. Following his series on relationships we will then have a series of **“Finding Happiness”**.

The elders pray that you will be benefited from these lessons prepared for our “spiritual feeding!”