



# The Tri-Cities Edifier

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## I'll See You In Bible Class . . .

- by Bill McFarland

### **Because I want more than anything to know the Lord.**

"With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! (Ps. 119:10)

### **Because I need the spiritual resources to do right.**

"I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. (Ps. 119:11)

### **Because I must find my way through this passing world.**

"I am a sojourner on the earth; hide not your commandments from me! ... Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." (Ps. 119.19,105)

### **Because I long for strength to cope with life.**

"My soul melts away for sorrow; strengthen me according to your word!" (Ps. 119.28)

### **Because I need to refocus on things that matter.**

"Turn my eyes from looking at worthless things; and give me life in your ways." (Ps. 119.37)

### **Because I hope in the precious promises of God.**

"This is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives me life... Keep steady my steps according to your promise, and let no iniquity get dominion over me." (Ps. 119.50, 133)

### **Because I am blessed by the company of my spiritual family.**

"I am companion of all who fear you, of those who keep your precepts." (Ps. 119.63)

### **Because I want to encourage others who care.**

"Those who fear you will see me and rejoice, because I have hoped in our word." (Ps. 119.74)

### **Because I must be prepared to serve.**

"I am your servant; give me understanding, that I may know your testimonies!" (Ps. 119.125)

### **Because I value the security of the Lord's guidance.**

"Great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble." (Ps. 119.165) 

## The Door is Closed to the Unforgiving Spirit

by Oren Caskey

A cornerstone to seeking God with honesty and integrity is that we must remove anger and resentment from our hearts. There is nothing that will keep us away from God more certainly than a failure to forgive those who have wronged us. Jesus said simply in Matthew 6:15, *"If you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."* It is only the merciful who will receive mercy. Matthew 5:7 is proof of that when Jesus says, *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."* James also writes about this in James 2:13, *"For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment."*

There is so much more to a truly merciful spirit. A merciful spirit is not one who that will grudgingly forgive others when they come to us for mercy; in other words, there should be no resentment towards the other when we forgive. Jesus called upon us to be people of character, that we will not rest until broken relationships are mended, even if we have to be the ones who take the initiative. The circumstances do not matter, whether the relationship has been broken by our own sin, or by that of the other party, or (as is usually the case) a certain amount of wrongdoing on both sides. In all cases we are to seek the other person out and do all we can to repair what has been broken. Remember Matthew 5:23-24, Jesus preaches, *“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”* Or look at Matthew 18:15 where Jesus says, *“Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother.”*

Paul wrote in Romans 12:18, *“If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.”* The beginning of the verse tells that being merciful requires doing so much more than we think is necessary. If God had thought of nothing more than what He “had” to do, He certainly would not have given His Son’s life to repair our relationship with Him. It was, after all, we who had broken the relationship, yet His love did not complain about having to do more than was “necessary” to fix it. He willingly offered Jesus without any form of resentment.

But think about this also: quite often we are wrong in our judgment that the other person has done anything to us that needs to be forgiven. When looking at granting forgiveness on those who wrong us, we need to guard our hearts against condescension. Perhaps it is actually we who need to be forgiven. Or perhaps we have simply misjudged the other person’s actions and everything that has occurred has been a misunderstanding. Having a forgiving spirit means not only being eager to forgive, but eager to believe the best in others and being humble enough to admit it when we’ve overestimated the wrongs that others have done. The Gospel Teacher, 6/10/18 

## Stop Profanity!

~by Harold Hancock

It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. One might think such a description is of Hollywood (the video entertainment industry), but although that would certainly be apt, it is actually James’ description of the tongue (Jas. 3:8). Your tongue. My tongue. James asserts that man’s tongue is exceedingly difficult to control and impossible to tame (Jas. 3:2,7,8).

Some people’s mouths spew a steady stream of filthiness and profanity. Their vocabulary seems to be limited to a couple hundred words, half of which would be considered vulgar or coarse by nearly anyone. In fact, this kind of person often enjoys “shocking” others with his or her speech. Teenagers often think that such speech makes them sound grown-up! No Christian should talk like that. We should put away filthy language out of our mouths (Col. 3:8).

Filthiness, foolish talking and coarse jesting (telling dirty jokes) are not “fitting” for saints, i.e., holy ones (Eph. 5:4). Filthiness and profanity of the above mentioned sort is easy to recognize, indeed, hard to miss. Many would be quick to point out that they do not talk like that. Not all profanity, however, is so well recognized. Profanity of a different “flavor” is quite common in the speech of some who would refrain from dirty jokes or the use of vulgar or coarse words.

The Decalogue of the Mosaic Law commanded the Israelites not to “take the name of the Lord in vain” (Exo. 20:7). God’s people were not to make reference to Him in an empty or meaningless way. The Lord was to be referred to with reverence and respect. As the commandment indicated, the Lord would not hold him guiltless who “misused His name” (NIV) in this fashion.

To use the words “Lord” and “God” in an empty or vain way is to profane the Lord’s name. To profane something is “to debase by a wrong, unworthy, or vulgar use.” (Webster). It is the defiling of something holy. The conversation of some is littered with references to the Lord and to God while the mind never contemplates the divine Creator. Their use of these words is truly “empty” or vain; the words become merely convenient exclamations or expletives.

One of the problems in controlling the tongue is that we develop habitual patterns of speech. The tongue can be engaged even as the mind is idling. We say things without thinking about the consequences or even whether such speech is right or wrong. It is my fear that even Christians sometimes profane the Lord through their irreverent use of such words as “Lord” and “God.” It may be done in a thoughtless (not intentional or rebellious) way, but I do not believe that the Lord will hold us guiltless if we speak this way.

Examine your own speech. Are you in the habit of referring to the Lord in vain fashion? Under the Law of Christ, we likewise have an obligation to treat the Lord with respect (Heb. 12:14-16). Watch that tongue!