

THE SOWER
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Old & New Treasures

Let me tell you about my children. When they were little, they received way too many toys. So occasionally, as parents we put some away in a box to make room for more. There was just one problem. Unlike some parents, we weren't quick acting by taking them to Goodwill. They just got set aside. Often, several months later, that child would discover the box wherever we had moved it and exclaim, "Look at all these new toys!" I've often told Gretchen through the years, "There is no need of buying new toys." We should just let them 'rediscover' old ones every few months.

When I read the following comments of Jesus, evidently God has been doing this for years. "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old." (Matthew 13:52 ESV).

Have you started a new project around the house during this stay at home directive? Today, the girls started work on cleaning out a closet upstairs. I'll give you one guess what it is in there. You got it! Toys! Somewhere in a stack of toys, Hannah found some stories she had written when she was five. That explained all the laughing we heard while they worked. They were stories that entertained a few years ago, and were just as good as new when she reread them again tonight.

Christ's parables are the same. They are so simple a five year old can understand them. A thirteen year old can reread them and gain a deeper understanding. A forty-seven year old can read them for the umpteenth time and think, "How have I missed that point all these years?" An eighty-five year old can read them again and still gain insight and wisdom. So how old are you? Read some of Christ's parables, and bring out some new and old treasures. There is no telling what you will find.

--Jimmy

Hodges

CHANGES

Politicians promise changes. In all of our lives we find constant change. We never know from one day to the next what to expect. James wrote, "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit': whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow...." (James 4:13-14a). (Continued back page)

Some changes may be for the better, while others for the worse. Some things, however, never change. The laws of nature, for instance, are constant and unchanging. From creation, a stone dislodged from a cliff would fall 96 feet per second. That has not changed, nor will it. Water, that thousands of years ago would boil at 180 degrees at sea level, will do the same today.

Some seem to think that God is changeable. Otherwise they would not think to make His word obsolete. However, the psalmist prayed, "You are the same, and your years will have no end" (Psa. 102:27). Moses declared, "God is not a man that He should lie, nor a son of man that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19).

Cultures change. Men are not long satisfied with the statutes of God, and set their own standards of morality and religion, but they have not consulted with God. Men may even redefine marriage, but we needn't expect God to rewrite His own "dictionary."

It is as true today as it was almost 2000 years ago, that Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life", the one way to the Father (John 14:6). It is as true today as it was in the early days of the church that a response to the gospel by obedient faith will by the grace of God secure the forgiveness of sins and acceptance into the Lord's spiritual body, the church (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:38, 47). Men change, as do their words. But God does not change, and His word will stand firm forever

--Ron

HONEYMOON TOAST

One of my daughter's wedding present was a toaster oven. Soon after the honeymoon, she and her husband tried it out. Almost immediately smoke billowed out of the toaster.

"Get the owner's manual!" my daughter's husband shouted.

"I can't find it anywhere!" cried my daughter a short time later. (Continued next column)

"Oops!" came a voice from the kitchen. "Well, the toast is fine, but the owner's manual's burned to a crisp." --*Cybersalt Digest*

The above bit of humor points out a common failing that we have—or at least I have—that when we receive something new that requires assembly or technical knowhow, we presume we can figure it out without consulting the owner's manual. After all, what could the owner's manual tell us that we can't already figure out? So we may think!

Our faulty self-assuredness is too frequently seen in man's failure to consult our spiritual "owner's manual"—a volume of books designed by our Creator to impart to us "the ;knowledge of God and

of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who hath called us to glory and virtue” (2 Peter 1:2-3). This volume, which we call the Bible, tells us from beginning to end where we came from and what will be our eternal destiny. It instructs us in living godly lives—lives in conformity to the will of God. As we defiantly ignore this “manual” and live our lives as we may prefer, we see the results in wars, terrorism, illicit sex, greed and resulting calamities in this life as well as in that which is to come. Even one that professes Christ may ignore His sacred Word, Man is ever prone to subject himself to human authority rather than seeking a “thus saith the Lord.” Many are content to just listen to the preacher—at least once in a while—rather than spend time personally reading and earnestly studying the Bible—our “owner’s manual.” Study the “manual” that is “given by inspiration of God, and is 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 Tim. 3:16-17).
-Ron

PRAY that a solution will be soon found to the present Covid-19 pandemic. While we may be saving some lives by secluding ourselves, we are ruining lives as we cut off the needed incomes for personal and family survival, as well as spiritual togetherness in the family of God.