



NON-PROFIT



TAX-EXEMPT

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” MARK 16:15

November 2019

FROM US TO YOU

Thanksgiving is the one time of the year that we collectively, as a nation, gather close to the people we love to thank God for the blessings He has kindly bestowed upon us. And we celebrate His love by having a festive atmosphere to share His bounty. But what about all those people who have no one to celebrate Thanksgiving with? Many churches and civic groups often provide for their needs. And there's a special blessing people feel when they make someone else's life a little better. However, Thanksgiving is only one day a year. Yet loneliness and the feeling of being unloved can make people feel left out all year long. In this issue we announce that we are sharing with you a letter received from Pastor Bob Ruth, who works at a correctional mental health facility in Larned, Kansas. You will find it in our [testimonial section](#).

The chaplains we serve do amazing work under very difficult circumstances. The government supplies them with the basics, such as office supplies, but not those of a religious nature. Therefore, we provide chaplains with Christian material that the government does not. That includes, but is not limited to, tracts, tray cards, role model books, videos, audios, New Testaments, and Bibles. However, the need is so great as there are so few chaplains and so many inmates. We wish could do more, but our funding has greatly dropped off in recent years. The chaplains we serve deal with incarcerated inmates who have lost their way in society and need to hear about the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is so much success they have achieved! Many of the inmates come from troubled backgrounds where they never knew anyone could love them. A great deal come from broken homes, and lots of them have been abused sexually. Not only does our material bless the inmates, we also hear that chaplains are blessed by what we do. They are human just like the rest of us. They have all the problems of everyday life. Moreover, the stress of the job causes chaplains to need a little Christian uplifting too, especially at this time of year. The same thing applies to prison guards. Both chaplains and guards do very difficult and dangerous work!

Many prisoners, especially the young, know what it is like to feel isolated, frightened, and alone. They see advertisements of happy family dinners in magazines and on television, where all kinds of delicious food is shown, especially at Thanksgiving. Often inmates come from broken homes. They can see the outside world around them, the loving family atmospheres of which they are not apart. It's hard to give love and kindness when you feel like you've never received any. Prison chaplains attempt to fill the void, but often pain that has built up over a lifetime is not easy to break through. The need is so great! Like people on the outside, inmates have used drugs, alcohol, and illicit sex to null the hurt, but in the long run that only makes things worse.

You may hear about terrible crimes and wonder how anyone can have so much hate. But the Bible compares sin to yeast which, once

it is there, multiplies. “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump” (Galatians 5:9 KJV). Sin is contagious. The person feels that no one cares about them, so why should they care about anyone else? They conclude that God doesn't love them because if He did He wouldn't have let them be abused as children? The devil uses this technique all the time. He causes the misery and then tells the victim that it's all God's fault. Nothing could be further from the truth! “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost” (Luke 19:10 NIV).

“When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone; but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death. Don't be deceived, my dear brothers. Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows” (James 1:13-17 NIV)



It is the job of the chaplain to tell prisoners, “God is not angry you. He sent His Son to rescue you from the inner bondage of sin and misery of the heart” (see John 8:34). “For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him” (John 3:16-17 NIV). “Come now, let us reason together; says the LORD. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crim-

son, they shall be like wool” (Isaiah 1:18 NIV). Resentments over a lifetime often form a hard barrier in the human heart that only Christ can change! Jesus said, “...I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Matthew 9:13 KJV).

Please pray for us, that God will supply our needs both financially, physically, and spiritually. And pray for our country as well. America has been blessed like no other country in modern times. But the standards we live by, and the freedom we have become accustomed to, are under attack. Satan has formed strongholds in many countries worldwide. And now he is trying to destroy all that God has given to us. This country was not founded on socialism, but Christianity. It is Christ who has made our country great! Remember to acknowledge Him during this special Holy day. Thanksgiving should be a celebration of God's grace and love toward us. It is not to be a feast of gluttony, or “Turkey Day” as some refer to it. Give glory and praise to the one who did not spare His own Son, but sacrificed Him for us. As David said, so long ago, “To the end that my glory may sing praise to thee, and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks unto thee for ever” (Psalms 30:12 KJV).

Happy Thanksgiving everyone, *Eric and Anne Kaestner*

A Wedding in Cana

By Anne Kaestner

Has God called you into a special ministry that He has ordained for you to have? If so, He has laid it on your heart and you feel a gentle nudge because He has told you that there is something He wants you to do. Therefore, you can have confidence that He will give you the tools to do it (Matthew 6:7-11). Jesus said, “If you **remain** in Me and My words **remain** in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you” (John 15:7 NIV). Consequently, it doesn’t matter what Satan does to try to stop it. You will succeed in God’s work, if you obey the Lord and continue to trust Him! However, and this is important, that means doing things **His way**, not the way that **you** think they should be done! I remember hearing a pastor at a church I used to attend giving a sermon. He told us how he had been in the park one day and came across a group of teenagers. Right away he saw it as an opportunity to preach to them. They listened to him talk about Christ. Then he told them to get down on their knees in front of him and repent. They just looked at him quizzically. So he repeated his demand. They didn’t move. So the pastor told the congregation that they deserved to go to Hell because he gave them the chance to accept Jesus and they didn’t do it.

What was his mistake? It was pride, and a terrible example of haughtiness, two of the greatest sins in the eyes of God. In fact, it was the original sin that every other sin stems from. It was the reason why Lucifer waged a mutiny against God (see Revelation 12:7-8) and lost. The name “Lucifer” means “Light Bearer.” But God the Son is light (John 1:1-5). When Jesus was on earth He said, “...I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12 NIV). After Lucifer’s rebellion, he was separated from the Light of God, and thrown out of Heaven to the earth. Therefore, he was no longer entitled to be called a light bearer. God has a habit of changing people’s names when their spiritual position changes. So He changed Lucifer’s name to Satan, which means “deceiver” because he is “...the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him” (Revelation 12:9 ASV).

Pride was also the sin that led Eve to bite into the forbidden fruit. Remember what Satan told her, “For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and **you will be like God**, knowing good and evil.’ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it” (Genesis 3:5-6 NIV). In the Lord’s day, pride was also the sin of the Pharisees (Luke 5:30) and teachers of the law. Jesus said of them, “...Watch out for the teachers of the law. They like to walk around in flowing robes and be greeted in the marketplaces, and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honor at banquets. They devour widows’ houses and for a show make lengthy prayers. Such men will be punished most severely” (Mark 12:38-40 NIV).

Therefore, when you have a need in your walk with God, simply go to the Lord and tell Him about it in prayer. However, don’t go with a self-satisfied attitude, such as “I deserve it because I’m a ‘King’s Kid.’” Jesus taught the importance of humility in our walk with God (Luke 14:8-11). The “King’s Kid Doctrine” teaches pride (James 4:6, 1 Peter 5:5), self-esteem, and an uppity, arrogant attitude, which is the opposite of the teachings of Christ. For the Bible says, “Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall...” (Proverbs 16:18-19 NIV). As for self-esteem, it is Christ who deserves our love and

esteem. Unfortunately, there are those who are too busy with their own sense of self-importance to remember that. All the blessings that we have in Christ are because of what **He** did for us! And yet, “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces He was despised, and **we esteemed Him not**. Surely He took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered Him stricken by God, smitten by Him, and afflicted” (Isaiah 53:3-4 NIV). The “King’s Kid” doctrine isn’t anything new. It was around in the Apostle Paul’s day. As a result, he wrote a sarcastic response to the Corinthian church to hopefully make them realize how dangerous this doctrine is and repent.

Paul wrote, “For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not? Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have become kings—and that without us! How I wish that you really had become kings so that we might be kings with you! For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men. We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are dishonored! To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world. I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children” (1 Corinthians 4:7-14 NIV. Compare with Revelation 3:14-19).

There is no way to really serve the Lord unless we approach Christ in humility and dependency. As King David said in his prayer of repentance after his terrible sin with Bathsheba, “O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it; You do not take pleasure in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a **broken and contrite heart**, O God, you will not despise” (Psalms 51:15-17 NIV. Also, see Luke 18:10-14).

When there was no wine left at the wedding in Cana, Mary, the mother of Jesus, went to Him and told Him about the problem. As far as God is concerned, we Christians are to be the Bride of Christ. He is the Bridegroom (Matthew 25:1-13 & 2 Corinthians 11:2). Mary trusted Jesus to do what needed to be done to correct the problem. Now the response that He gave to His mother may have seemed strange to an outsider. He said, “Dear woman, why do you involve Me?... My time has not yet come” (John 2:4 NIV). On the surface this sounded as if Jesus did not plan to do anything about the problem. However, He was, in effect, saying, “This is not My wedding. This is someone else’s marriage. Therefore, it is not yet time for Me to provide the wine.” Of course, Jesus was speaking metaphorically, referring to the spilling of His own blood on Calvary, so that He would be able to redeem (Galatians 3:13, Job 19:25-27) His bride from the bondage of sin and death (Romans 6:6-8, John 8:34, 2 Peter 2:18-19).

Yet mothers usually know their sons fairly well, and Mary was no exception. Like most mothers, she had raised her Son from an infant. She had spent many years watching Him grow to maturity, and learning how He would respond to situations. And somehow, instinctively, she knew that Jesus would do something to help. She had learned to trust Him, and knew that other people could put their total



confidence in Him as well (Proverbs 3:5-7). So *“His mother said to the servants, ‘Do whatever He tells you’”* (John 2:5 NIV). The servants must have had a lot of faith in Mary’s judgment, because they did exactly what Jesus told them to do, even though it required a lot of trust. *“Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, ‘Fill the jars with water’; so they filled them to the brim. Then He told them, ‘Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.’ They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, ‘Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now’”* (John 2:6-10 NIV. Compare with Acts 2:13-17).

There’s a lot of symbolism here because God used this real life incident to demonstrate a spiritual truth. The jars were made of stone. There are many definitions for the word “stone” but the first one given in my American Standard dictionary is “Concreted **earthy** or mineral matter; **rock**.” When God originally created the human race, He started out with a prototype named Adam. *“The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being”* (Genesis 2:7 NIV). Now, when you hear about some car manufacturer coming out with some prototype automobile you know that it is just a model, or example of what they are planning to make. If the prototype goes into production, each individual car has to be made from scratch. No car company has ever come up with a car that reproduces after its own kind.

However, Adam, the prototype of Man, was the father of the entire human race. God put within him the ability to reproduce after his own kind. Just as God put seed within the vegetable and animal kingdoms, He put seed into the body of Adam. Everyone who has ever been born into this world, other than the Lord Jesus Christ (Luke 1:34-35), was born of the seed of Adam. Therefore, when Adam sinned against God, he not only defiled himself spiritually, but he also corrupted every part of his body as well. And since the seed that brought you and me into this world originated in Adam, **we** were born in a state of corruption as well. Yet, *“as a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him; for He knows how we are formed, He remembers that we are dust”* (Psalms 103:13-14 NIV).

The term “dust” refers to garden soil, for mankind was originally created in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:8). It was the earth from that garden that God used to form the man’s body (Genesis 2:7). So our bodies were made from materials that came out of the earth. Likewise, the stone jars (John 2:6-10) were made out of material that came out of the earth. God gave us bodies so that our spirits would have a resting place. The human body was created for the purpose of being a receptacle for the seed of God. God breathed His own breath into Adam and gave him life. *“For our ‘God is a consuming fire’”* (Hebrews 12:29 NIV). Therefore, when He breathed into Adam, He was lighting a flame of life within the man. That flame came from God. So, since Adam was an offshoot from God, he was in a sense, a son of God (Luke 3:38). *“So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number...’”* (Genesis 1:27-28 NIV).

Until God breathed life into the man, he was just like one of those empty stone jars. His body was made out of material that came out

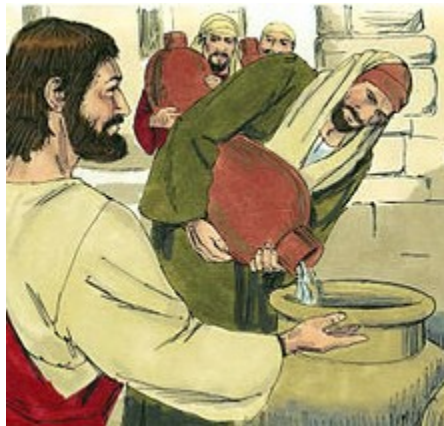
of the earth, but he was just a fancy sculpture of flesh and blood. That’s why the Lord is also referred to as being a Potter (see Isaiah 29:16, 45:9 and Romans 9:21). *“Yet, O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of Your hand”* (Isaiah 64:8 NIV).

We know that the stone water jars at the wedding ceremony were *“...the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons”* (John 2:6 NIV). They held a lot of water. So does the human body! It is why God made us out of the same chemicals that are in clay. Remember, that God formed the human body from the dust of the ground. But that ground was earth in God’s garden. There are several different types of earth. However, since about fifty to seventy-five percent of the human body is made up of water, the Lord needed to use a soil that has the same chemicals as clay (see Job 10:9). For any gardener will tell you that clay works best at retaining water. Through our normal, natural, human birth, all of us are born into this world the same way, in bodies full of water. However, the master at the wedding ceremony did not want to serve water to his guests. He wanted wine! Remember what God said to Adam and Eve, *“...Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth...”* (Genesis 1:28 KJV). Wine comes from **good fruit!**

Jesus was only a guest at the wedding in Galilee, but later on, He would become a spiritual Bridegroom for us, His church. Jesus is the Word of God (John 1:1-14). It was His breath that was originally breathed into Adam (John 1:3-4). Thousands of years later, He left Heaven and became the seed of **new** life for everyone born of Adam (1 Peter 1:23, 1 Corinthians 15:45-47. Also, see John 3:3). For the man through whom God had intended to produce life, had produced death. And all those born of Adam’s seed were born into eternal death. But *“...God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life”* (John 3:16 KJV). Spiritually speaking, *“...the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth”* (John 1:14 KJV). God sent His Son into this world *“...to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Luke 19:10 KJV). For until we receive Christ as our Savior and Lord all of us are lost in sin.

Jesus portrayed Himself as a shepherd who goes out in search of His one little lost lamb. And when He finds it, *“...He joyfully puts it on His shoulders and goes home. Then He calls His friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with Me; I have found My lost sheep’”* (Luke 15:5-6 NIV). Likewise, Jesus gave us an account about a prodigal son who had left the household of his wealthy father thinking that he would be better off on his own. This is like Adam, who had been given so much by God, but left his Father because he loved his wife more than he loved God. When God looks upon anything, He always sees it as if it is in its original form. For example, the Jews are called “The children of Israel” because they were descendants of Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel (Genesis 32:28). Likewise, God looks upon mankind and sees the stain of corrupted human flesh (Jude 1:23) all the way back to Adam. For we were born children of Adam, our forefather.

Nevertheless, if we will forsake the fleshly nature of Adam, and the first birth, and become reunited to God, through His Son, Jesus Christ (1 Timothy 2:5-6), His joy will be as the father of the prodigal son. *“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against Heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals’* (Continued On Page 4)



on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' So they began to celebrate" (Luke 15:21-24 NIV). Collectively, those of us who return to God, through our Savior, the Lord Jesus, become His bride. And God the Father is planning a big wedding feast in Heaven (Revelation 19:7-9 and Matthew 22:2-14).

Now, let's go back to the wedding ceremony "...at Cana in Galilee..." (John 2:1 NIV). The master of the banquet did not want to drink water. He wanted wine! Water symbolizes our first birth in the flesh. However, Jesus turned the water into wine. Wine symbolizes the blood of Christ. It is through His blood that we are filled with His Holy Spirit (John 20:22). When the Holy Spirit first arrived upon the early church it was at the time of Pentecost. His impact upon those who received Him was so strong that they were giddy with joy. And, since God wanted to reach the many foreigners who were in the city, the Holy Spirit began to speak through those who received Him.

So the foreigners heard the Gospel being preached to them in their native languages. "Utterly amazed, they asked: 'Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language?'... Some, however, made fun of them and said, 'They have had too much wine'" (Acts 2:7-8, 13 NIV). Have you ever been so filled with the Holy Spirit that you feel intoxicated? There have been a few times in my life that I have personally experienced such joy from God that I felt as if I was walking around on a cloud. At times, when the Holy Spirit has been strongly upon me, I have felt quite light headed.

The Master of the banquet had already had a lot of wine to drink because he compared the wine that God had made to the wine he had drunk earlier. That's when "...he called the bridegroom aside and said, 'Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now'" (John 2:9-10 NIV). It was a wedding celebration. So one would assume that the wine that was served to the guests earlier was of good quality. And, as the banquet master said, the best wine would normally have been served first. So he had already drunk the best that the host had to offer. For he did not know that the new wine had not been made by man, but by God. "...He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew..." (John 2:9 NIV). God's servants always know where the wine of God comes from. It comes through Jesus Christ. "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under Heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12 NIV).

God has sent His servants out into His Heavenly vineyard to gather the fruit from the Vine. Jesus, "...went on to tell the people this parable: 'A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time. At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out. Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send My Son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect Him.' But when the tenants saw Him, they talked the matter over. 'This is the heir,' they said. 'Let's kill Him, and the inheritance will be ours.' So they threw Him out of the vineyard and killed Him. 'What then will the owner of the vineyard do to them? He will come

and kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others.' When the people heard this, they said, 'May this never be!' Jesus looked directly at them and asked, 'Then what is the meaning of that which is written: 'The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone? Everyone who falls on that stone will be broken to pieces, but he on whom it falls will be crushed'" (Luke 20:9-18 NIV. Also, see 1 Peter 2:1-9).

As a farmer sows seed in a field and expects to reap a harvest from it in the fullness of time, God also planted seed within the body of Adam, the man He created. It was good seed, because it originated from God. Did you know that God is a gardener? Our Lord, Jesus Christ said, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the **gardener**. He cuts off every branch **in Me** that bears no **fruit**, while every branch that does bear fruit He prunes so that it will be even more **fruitful**" (John 15:1-2 NIV. In that passage, Jesus was speaking of the **second** birth (John 3:3)). The reason why we need to be reborn through the **second** birth is because our **first** birth failed to produce **good fruit** for God (Galatians 5:22-25)!

However, that is not what God had originally intended for us. For out of the dirt and dust of the ground, He formed the body of a man, Adam. If the Lord had stopped there, He would have had a lovely statue (Isaiah 64:8), a lifeless body of stiff, empty flesh. But that is not what God wanted. The only reason that the body was created was as a dwelling place for the human spirit. "...For a spirit hath not flesh and bones..." (Luke 24:39 KJV). However, our Creator

wanted intelligent beings with whom He could communicate and fellowship. God wanted children! The first man, Adam, started out as a son of God (Luke 3:38). That means that he originated **from** God. "For our God is a consuming fire" (Hebrews 12:29 KJV). And fire has the unique ability to reproduce itself without diminishing the original flame. Therefore, we are eternal beings who will never cease to exist.

However, the Bible says we will eventually die physically. And, contrary to the Hindu and Buddhist concept of reincarnation, we will not be reborn as someone or something else. Native Americans even believe that we might come back as a tree or an animal. In India cows are considered sacred due to reincarnation. But

the Bible tells us, "...man is destined **to die once**, and after that to face judgment," (Hebrews 9:27 NIV). After this one lifetime, it is too late to change directions. Therefore, Jesus said it is important that we "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it" (Matthew 7:13-14 NIV).

In other words, don't follow the crowd to Hell! How do you avoid it? "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever" (1 John 2:15-17 NIV). Of course, make sure your doctrine matches up with the Bible. However, when trying to reach others for Christ, the best testimony you can give is your kindness and Christian example. "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away" (1 Peter 5:2-4 NIV).

