

Preaching Outlines

Dear friend,

I hope that these outlines will be a help to you. These are some of my favorite messages. I have fond memories of preaching these messages long and loud. My prayer is that you will be able to use the entire outline or maybe even glean some thoughts and ideas from these outlines. Perhaps they can help someone come to salvation or grow in their Christian walk.

*You fellow servant in the Lord,
Pastor Clifford D. Swankler*

FOUR Truths our Founding Fathers Believed: *Prov. 14:34 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.*

(1) Notice this verse teaches that the way we LIVE, effects WHERE we live: *Righteousness exalteth . . . but sin is a reproach* (Right living LIFTS UP; Sin TEARS DOWN!)

(2) Notice this verse also teaches the way we LIVE, effects WHAT we live: *Righteousness . . . but sin . . .* (There is a difference between GOD'S WAY and MAN'S WAY . . . it's not grey with God.)

(3) Notice this verse also teaches the way we LIVE, effects WHY we live: *Prov. 14:34 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.* (Many do not care about anyone else but themselves. Do you care about . . . NEXT GENERATION; YOUR CHILDREN; GRANDCHILDREN; YOUR NEIGHBOR?)

SAYING: A POLITICIAN looks to the next election, but a STATESMAN looks to the next generation. (Who to you look to . . . helping others, or just helping yourself?)

INTRODUCTION: America is a country that has done more in the world for the cause of Christianity and Freedom than any other in the history of mankind. **America has PROMISED the greatest good; It's PRESENCE has impacted the greatest number of people; America has PROVIDED the greatest quality of living. It has PRODUCED the greatest nation; It has PROVED the greatest freedom in history; And it has PAVED the way to the greatest advancement of mankind the world has ever known.** (America is truly a blessed nation.)

I. Our Founding Fathers believed that . . . AMERICA had GODLY ROOTS: The Mayflower Compact, November, 1620. "In the Name of God Almighty, we whose names are underwritten . . . having undertaken for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, . . . a voyage to plant the first colony in northern Virginia (they were in Massachusetts); do by these present, solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politick . . ."

A. Three Godly Truths those on Board the Mayflower Believed:

#1. They Believed the New Nation would Glorify God: for the glory of God

#2. They Believed the New Nation would extend Christianity: for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith

#3. They Believed their Authority was from God: In the Name of God Almighty

B. America needs to get back to Righteousness Again: *Prov. 14:34 Righteousness exalteth a nation* (A nation is lifted up by right living or Godly living.)

II. Our Founding Fathers believed that . . . AMERICA had GODLY REINS: July 4, 1776, Declaration of Independence, “We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. That among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

A. Four Christian “Self-Evident Truths” our Founding Fathers Believed: We hold these truths to be self-evident:

#1. They Believed in a Creator: That all men are created . . .

#2. They believed that God created them in His own image: That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator

#3. They Believed in Supernatural Acts by God: . . . that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. That among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” **(They believed that a supernatural Being began this universe and is responsible for giving them the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.**

B. A Nation is Blessed that has God on the Throne: *Ps. 33:12 Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.*

III. Our Founding Fathers believed that . . . AMERICA had GODLY RESTRICTIONS: July 4, 1776, Declaration of Independence, “We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights

A. Look at the Truth our Founding Fathers believed about Godly Restrictions:

#1.. They Believed in Moral Absolutes: that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. **(This means the Government cannot give these rights away, because these rights came from God.)**

#2. They Believed the Government does not Control the Church: **The First Amendment:** Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, **(The government is not the church, and the church is not the government.)**

B. The Bible Declares what is Right and Wrong: *Prov. 14:34 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.*

IV. Our Founding Fathers believed that . . . AMERICA had GODLY RESPONSIBILITY: **The First Amendment:** Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances. **(“Free exercise thereof” = Go to church; Read Your Bible; Pray. “the freedom of speech” = Soul Winning; Voicing opposition against sin. “of the press” = Gospel tracks; Scripture assemblies. “redress of grievances” = Someone needs to address this government that it is going the wrong way.)**

A. Your Actions affect more than just You: *Prov. 14:34 Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people.* **(Your actions affect others people and also your nation.)**

#1. America has Forgotten God . . . and the Result is the Deterioration of this Country: *Ps. 9:17 The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*

Father's Day – *Joshua 24:15* And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: *but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.* **Joshua is a great Biblical example of a godly father. In this passage of Scripture Joshua is at the age of 110, it is at this time that he summons the leaders of Israel to Shechem for a farewell address. He charged them to obey the Lord who had fought for them and given them an inheritance. He warned them of the danger of moving away from God. ILLUSTRATION: A Car: Start ; Stick (Get it in gear); Steer it.**

I. Look at Joshua's Starting: *choose you this day whom ye will serve;* (Remember Joshua was one of the 12 spies sent into the Promised Land. 10 spies gave a negative report, Joshua was one of 2 that gave a positive report, trusting God. Joshua also had walked with Moses for 40 years; God chose Joshua as Moses successor to led Israel into the conquest of Canaan for another 25 years.) **If your walking with God, expect to GO to GREAT places!**

a. HEY DAD, you're going to have to START something's – START . . . Reading your Bible; a Prayer Time; a Family Altar; being a Witness; inviting others to Church.

II. Look at Joshua's Sticking: *we will serve the LORD* (There were many battles that Joshua led Israel in defeating (LOOK at verses 9-11), (There was EGYPT -The place that enslaved Israel, and sought to destroy Israel; There was Balak – He was the King of Moab; There was Balaam- He was a pay per-view prophet who was sent to call down a curse on Israel. There was the city Jericho – Remember the marching around the city for 7 days before the walls would fall down. There was the AMORITES; PERIZZITES; CANAANITES; HITTITES; GIRGASHITES; HIVITES; JEBUSITES **but the greatest battle was the SPIRITUAL battle facing Israel at this time.)**

a. HEY DAD, you're going to have to get some STICKYNESS in your CHRISTIANITY. (Make it GOOD and STICKY like DUCT TAPE.) ("It will hold the world together", maybe even you!)

III. Look at Joshua's Steering: *but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.* (You take the STEERING WHEEL of a car to direct your way, and anyone else RIDING with you.)

Joke: Honey, I heard someone is driving the wrong way! Someone, there are hundreds of someones. (Don't be driving the wrong way.)

IV. Fathers today need to Start; Stick; and Steer: **(Say it like a tongue twister!)**

(1) START Fathers need to START; Start Leading; Start Opposing Sin; Start Standing for Truth.

(2) STICK: Don't Quit! Get that in GEAR and GO! **"Going gets tough, the tough get going."**

(3) STEER: Fathers need to lead their families. Your family is RIDING ALONG with you!

STUDY: The family needs the Father in the Home . . . this is the STATS of fatherless homes.

24 million live in a fatherless home. They are 4 times more likely to live in poverty; They are more likely to struggle with alcoholism; 71% drop out of high school; 71% become teen mothers; 10 times more likely to be beaten or murdered; 70% percent of long-term prison inmates; ¾'s of the juvenile criminals who are a threat to the public; 75% of those charged with homicide; A survey of 108 rapists, 60% came from broken homes. **(Don't listen to the FEMINIST today who say that FATHERS are DISPOSABLE.)**

As far back as the 1970s, family researchers began noticing that, Girls tended to "internalize" their unhappiness and were likely to become depressed. Boys, on the other hand, "externalized" or "acted out": They became more impulsive, aggressive and "antisocial."

V. How can Fathers . . . START, STICK, and STEER: (Here is just ONE POINT I think will help!)

#1. COMMIT . . . and don't QUIT!

a. COMMIT and don't QUIT when it comes to your FAMILY: We have many terrible social problems today in America that can be traced to homes that are absence of a father.

(1) According to the U.S. Census Bureau: 24 million children in America are without their father in the home. **(One out of every three.) (Would you agree this is a Crisis? Nine in ten American parents agree this is a crisis.)**

b. COMMIT and don't QUIT when it comes to your MARRIAGE: *Mark 10:9 What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. (Remember your vows! Better/Worse, Richer/Poorer, Sickness/Health, Till DEATH!)* (You were fortunate to find someone the first time, you might not a second.) **JOKE: "No hope of getting better, Can't get much worse, I take him as is."**

Divorce STATS: In America, there is one divorce approximately every 36 seconds. 41% of first marriages end in divorce; 60% of second marriages end in divorce. 73% of third marriages end in divorce. (You see it don't get better, just worse.)

c. COMMIT and don't QUIT when it comes to your JOB: Most common subject of argument in homes? **MONEY! (Money may not be everything, but it does pay the bills.)** *1 Tim. 5:8 But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel. (God says you a sad excuse for a provider when you don't take care of your family.)*

d. COMMIT and don't QUIT when it comes to GOD: I have seen families fall apart when they fell away from God. **50% of Americans have no church home. The United States now ranks third (3rd) following China and India in the number of people who are not professing Christians.**

(1) Look at what Happened Years after Joshua had died and was Buried: *Judges 2:10-12 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim: And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, (Fathers . . . it is up to you, to make a difference in the Home.)*

CONCLUSION: Fathers today need to Start; Stick; and Steer: (Say it like a tongue twister!)

(1) START Fathers need to START; Start Leading; Start Opposing Sin; Start Standing for Truth.

(2) STICK: Don't Quit! Get that in GEAR and GO! **"Going gets tough, the tough get going."**

(3) STEER: Fathers need to lead their families. Your family is RIDING ALONG with you!

Raise Up the Flag: *Is. 13:1-2 The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did see. 2 Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.* **INTRODUCTION: I Love to see the American Flag Raised up High.**

I. God Tells us to Raise Up the Flag (In this passage of Scripture, God says to raise your flag.): *2 Lift ye up a banner. . . Isaiah the prophet sees into the future to a time when wicked Babylon is taken into captivity. Notice that the banner is raised against the nobles of Babylon. God says that these who would attack Babylon are His agents in verse 3 I have commanded my sanctified ones, I have also called my mighty ones for mine anger, The sanctified ones is probably a reference to the invasion of the Media-Persian armies that would one day come against Babylon. But just as Babylon will suffer a terrible judgment at the hands of the Media-Persian armies, so shall the Babylon of the last days suffer destruction from God.*

#1. Look at what the Bible says about Babylon's Wickedness and her Destruction:

Matt. 1:17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations. (Babylon was the wicked city that held captive God's people throughout the Old Testament.)

Rev. 17:5-6 And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration. (Babylon is mentioned in prophecy as a great city that persecutes God's people.)

Rev. 18:21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. (Babylon is told to be in the Scriptures a great city that will be thrown down.)

Rev. 14:8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. (Babylon is pictured in prophecy as a great city that will fall because it has led the world into sexual immorality.)

Rev. 18:2-3 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and she hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies. (Babylon is spoken of in the latter days as a dirty city with much wealth, which finally helped many nations of the earth.)

#2. God's People are told to come out from among Babylon and it's Influence: *Rev. 18:4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.*

CONCLUSION: Christians are to live in a way that is Biblical and not Babylonian. (We are in this world but we are not to be of this world.) **(We are to set your flag up for others to see your allegiance.)**

The Babylonians _____ a certain way. (Talked; Behaved; Dressed; Thought; Lived.)

II. God Told Israel to Raise Up the Flag: Numbers 2:2 Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house: far off about the tabernacle of the congregation shall they pitch. **(Standard is the same as “banner” or “flag”.)**

1. First, we see that they all Dwell in Tents: Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch . . . **(We do pitch our tents in this world, and have in it no permanent city. We are just passing through . . . so don't get too attached.)**

2. Secondly we see, those tribes were to Pitch Together: Every man of the children of Israel . . . **(God's people should have a love, one for another . . . and get along.)**

3. Thirdly, Every one must know his Place and Stay in it: Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard **(God had a place for every tribe around the Tabernacle & God has a place for you here at Liberty Independent Baptist Church.)**

4. Fourthly, Every tribe had its Flag Ensign: . . . with the ensign of their father's house: **(The ensign was the design on the flag which represented the father of the family. We have a Heavenly Father and our flag representing God and His Son the Lord Jesus Christ should fly high keeping us together.)**

III. We are Challenged to Raise Up the Flag: There Are Banners That We Must Raise Up and displayed for all to see. *Is. 13: 2 Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand, that they may go into the gates of the nobles.*

1. First of all we must Raise Up the Flag Of Declaration: *2 Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain* **(We are Christians & we need to be proud of that.)**

a. This is to Identify your Position: Let every one will know who you are & which side that you are on. **(STORY – Deaf man that came to church. “So everyone knows what side I'm on.”)**

b. This is so the Enemy will know where you Stand: *Phil. 2:15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;*

2. Secondly, we must Raise Up the Flag Of Proclamation: **(People need to be saved.)** *Is. 13: 2 Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them,*

3. Thirdly, we must Raise Up A Banner Of Occupation **(We are caught up in spiritual warfare.)** *Is. 13: 2 Lift ye up a banner upon the high mountain, exalt the voice unto them, shake the hand,*

Ephs. 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

4. Fourthly, we must Raise Up A Banner Of Celebration: *1 Cor. 15:57 “But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* **(Our victory is in the Lord Jesus Christ, and we already have it.)**

CONCLUSION: Raise Up the Flag!

The Valley of Baca: *Ps. 84:5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. 6 Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. 7 They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God. (Baca is the valley where faith is put to the test.)*

I. The Valley of Baca is Biblical: (It is an Illustration of the Struggles in the Life of a Christian):

People experience suffering at one time or another in life. Christians know that God cares about our suffering, but you can't help but wonder . . . "Why does God allow it?" The Bible speaks of a place of suffering called Baca. I believe this place in the Scriptures called Baca provides for us the answers to our questions regarding suffering. **The Key is in trusting God. It is when we put our trust in Him, and stop asking questions, that God gives us peace, and God helps us with the strength, to dig a well in a desert. BUT HEED THIS WARNING:** If we do not dig a well, or make an effort to show faith in God, turning to Him and doing His will . . . then WHEN He sends the rain of help and healing . . . that rain will simply drain away from us. Today, open your heart in believing that it is for the glory of God and also for your good.

II. The Valley of Baca has Badness: Baca is not a Vacation Spot; Tourist Attraction; or a Postcard Pictured Place.

#1. Baca's Valley is Beneath: If there is a valley, then all around are high places. (A person will at sometime feel like he has hit the bottom and is beneath the high places. My recommendation is to look up, because the high places are all around you.)

#2. Baca's Valley is Besieging (Besetting means to surround or enclose.): It was a valley of bushes and thorns which one could not be passed without much labour.

#3. Baca's Valley is Bereaving: This valley is called "Baca" which means "weeping", it was the "valley of tears".

#4. Baca's Valley is Bewildering: You will not find water ready and available in Baca's valley. It is a dry, barren, lifeless place. (Baca is the kind of place that makes you question the direction of your life, and your faith, and your God. "God I don't understand . . . why? What is going on?"

a. GOOD NEWS for you BACCA VALLEY TRAVELERS: Baca's Valley is Betwixt (If your in a valleys surrounded by high places, then you came from a high place, but there is also a reachable high place in front of you.): **The Psalmist says in Ps. 121, I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the LORD,**

II. The Valley of Baca has Benefit: Do you want the benefit found in Baca? Then you need to say, "Thank you Lord, this valley is for me."

#1. Baca has Blessing: *5 Blessed is the man whose strength is in thee; in whose heart are the ways of them. (This hardship we are going through can teach us to realize our weakness, and God's great strength.)*

#2. Baca has Beauty: *6 Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools. (This valley can be what you make it to be. Take this hardship and put it in the hands of God, do something with what you have and God will bring BEAUTY from it.)*

III. The Valley of Baca has a Beginning: It would be wonderful if we could always be on the mountaintop, but life has its valleys and we must pass through them. **(This valley could be a starting point . . . for God to do some great thing in your life. This valley could MAKE YOU . . . or BRAKE YOU. . . depending on what you do with it. Put it in God's hands.)**

#1. Believe: *12 O LORD of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.* **(Why not decided today to trust God completely with every area of life. That part that you have been holding out in giving over completely to God . . . trust God.)**

a. **Trust God with your ____.** (Marriage; Children; Christian Service; Heartache; Grievance; Worry.)

#2. Beseech: *8 O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer:* **(We don't pray and wonder why things are in a mess.) (Pray, Believe and Receive; or Doubt, Pout and do without.)**

a. **We are to pray about every area of our Life:** *Phil. 4:6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

#3. Belong: *4 Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee.* **(The harder things get, the closer you need to be to Jesus.)**

a. **Look at how the Psalmist speaks of God's House:** *Vs. 1 How amiable are thy tabernacles,* **(Do you look forward to Church . . . the Bible . . . Christian Service?)**

Vs. 2 My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. **(If absence makes the heart grow fonder, some people must really love their church.)**

#4. Behave: *10 For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.* **(It is easy to lose it and misbehave because of what your going through . . . but behave.)**

a. **Misbehavior can Cost You:** **It can Cost you your ____.** (Testimony; Influence; Job; Marriage; Friends; Money.)

#5. Begin: *6 Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well; the rain also filleth the pools.* **(Opportunity swings on the hinges of Opposition.) (It could be God has brought you through this valley because of the next mountain peak before you . . . He wants you on top of.)**

CONCLUSION: I. The Valley of Baca is Biblical: It is an Illustration of the Struggles in the Life of a Christian.

II. The Valley of Baca has Badness: Baca is not a Vacation Spot; Tourist Attraction; or a Postcard Pictured Place.

II. The Valley of Baca has Benefit: Do you want the benefit found in Baca? Then you need to say, "Thank you Lord, this valley is for me."

III. The Valley of Baca has a Beginning: This valley could be a starting point for God to do some great thing in your life.

The Key is in trusting God. **It is when we put our trust in Him, and stop asking questions, that God gives us peace, and God helps us with the strength, to dig a well in a desert. BUT HEED THIS WARNING:** If we do not dig a well, or make an effort to show faith in God, turning to Him and doing His will . . . then WHEN He sends the rain of help and healing . . . that rain will simply drain away from us. Today, open your heart in believing that it is for the glory of God and also for your good

How to Measure Questionable Things – *Rm. 14:2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. 3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him*
5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. (Some things in life can be confusing, especially if you base what you do on everybody else . . . and what they do.)

I. What are Questionable Things? These are questions about things in our lives that we seem to not have a clear answer from the Bible . . . Is it RIGHT or WRONG?

#1. Some will say let your Conscience be his Guide: Not very good advice, because a person's conscience is regulated by what he believes; so if he doesn't believe right, his conscience will mislead him.

#2. HERE IS A VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION TO ANSWER FIRST: If you Find out the TRUTH are You Willing to Do What Is Right? *John 7:17 "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine."*

a. A Person cannot approach God with a Proudful Attitude: *Lord, let me know whether this is right or wrong, and I will decide if I will do what is right. He must have the attitude, Lord, I don't know whether this is right or wrong,. but if you will let me know for sure" I will do right regardless of what others say or what my preferences are.*

II. How do we Measure Questionable Things? With the Bible!

#1. The Bible is Written for ALL People of ALL Ages: *Lk. 21:33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.*

a. Curtis Hudson said this . . . Because the Bible is a book of all ages, therefore, everything could not be spelled out in detail. For instance, if there were a verse in the Bible that stated, "**Thou shalt not smoke Camels (Camel cigarettes),**" those old rabbis would have had a difficult time interpreting the passage; and it is doubtful they would have ever figured out exactly what it meant. Some would probably make sure they never built a fire near their camel lest the smoke blow in his direction.

And suppose there were a verse in the Old Testament that said, "**Thou shalt not watch TV.**" Then those rabbis would have spent hours discussing what TV meant, and it is doubtful they would have ever reached an agreement. So since the Bible was written for all men of all ages, many things are not clearly spelled out.

#2. The Bible is a Condensed Book: *John 21:25, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written." (If everything about Jesus was written in books, no one would ever find enough time to read them all. The Bible is not a revelation of what God knows, but a revelation of what God wants men to know.)*

III. Follow these Scriptural Rules for Measuring Questionable Things:

#1. Will it Glorify God? 1 Cor. 10:31 *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or **whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.** (Does the thing you have a question about bring honor to God? Does it give God a good name? If not, then it is wrong.)*

a. God Leads us into Righteousness for His Name's Sake: Psalm 23:3 *"He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."* (Christians bear God's name. Our Lifestyle, Language, Attitudes, Dress reflect on God's name.)

#2. Can it be Done for the Lord? Col. 3:23 ***And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;** (Is it something that we could do for Jesus? Would Jesus be welcomed?)*

#3. Can it be Done in Jesus' Name? Col. 3:17 *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, **do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,** (When the believer is faced with a matter and can't decide whether it is right or wrong, he should simply ask, "Can I do it in the name of the Lord Jesus?" If not, then it is wrong.)*

#4. How does it Appear? 1 Thes. 5:22 *Abstain from **all appearance of evil.** (When in doubt, it is best to lay out.)* This was an old saying I had when I was in a band playing music that was not Christian, we still had sense to say, "nothing is better then playing the wrong note".)

#5. Would it Hinder another Christian? Rm. 14:12 *It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, **nor any thing** whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. (We have a responsibility to every other born-again believer. We must do everything possible to help him on in his Christian life and be careful never to do anything that offends him. If the thing in question offends other Christians, then it is wrong.)*

#6. Does it Involve the Wrong Company? 2 cor. 6:14 *Be ye not unequally yoked together with **unbelievers:** for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? (We are told in the Bible to be friendly to everyone, but that does not mean that we should be everybody's friend . . . Don't run with skunks . . . or you'll stink!)*

#7. Is it what I want to Reap in my Children? Gal. 6:7 *Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. (I've see children participate in what their parents did . . . it will happen.) (The apple don't fall too far from the tree.)*

#8. Am I willing to Face it at Judgment? 2 Cor. 5:10 *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. (We will stand and be accountable for what we do.) (Responsibility is something that comes with great Accountability too.)*

Give Me this Mountain: Joshua 14:9-12 *And Moses sware on that day, saying, Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance, and thy children's for ever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God. And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said. (In this text we see that the men of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb speaks to Joshua, the leader of all Israel. Caleb was the leader from the tribe of Judah 40 years before and He is still his tribe's spokesman as he speaks about the land of Hebron. Here Caleb stakes his claim, based on the promise made to him by Moses. Joshua blesses Caleb and gives him Hebron as his inheritance .)*

Introduction: God has a mountain for you and for me. **(God has something in your life for you to accomplish for His glory.)** If you are going to get to the top it will take some determination and faith. **First, are you saved? To begin the climb first you must be born again!**

I. The Outset: 6 *Then the children of Judah came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenazite said unto him, Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said unto Moses the man of God concerning me and thee in Kadeshbarnea. (You have got to start somewhere . . . what better place to START then with God.)*

#1. Put God First: Put God before _____. **(TV** – That means you might have to sacrifice your “Gilligan’s Island”); **Sports** – That means you’ll come to church on Super Bowl night; **Clothes** – That means modesty & decency rules over short shorts, bikini, and skin tight britches.

#2. Caleb based his Direction on God’s Word: *Thou knowest the thing that the LORD said (Too many base their direction on feelings rather than God’s promises.)*

Saying: Praise God! They can burn the Bible, but not the promises of the Bible.

II. The Outlook: 10 *And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, as he said, these forty and five years, even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while the children of Israel wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I am this day fourscore and five years old. (We must be optimistic!)*

#1. Have a Positive Outlook when it comes to God’s Will: 10 *And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive, (Caleb was 85; OLD does not mean OUT! Zachariah and Elizabeth the Bible says were stricken in years – that means OLD! Moses was 80 when he led Israel out of Egypt; Abraham was 100 when Isaac was born. (Do you know what that means . . . OLD PEOPLE RULE!)*

#2. Have a Positive Outlook when it comes to God’s Power: 11 *As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength was then, even so is my strength now, for war, both to go out, and to come in . . . Your strength is in the Lord, not _____. (Biceps; Triceps; Lats; Fats)*

SONG: *God can do anything but Fail.*

III. The Outreach: *12 Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how the Anakims were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: if so be the LORD will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD said.*

#1. Go and Take with Full Confidence what God has given You: If God has called you to be a _____, GO with FULL CONFIDENCE in God. (Witness at your work place; Missionary across the sea; S.S. Teacher; Bus Worker; Preacher.)

a. Our Confidence is not in SELF, but in GOD: *Jn. 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

IV. The Outcome: *14 Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite unto this day, because that he wholly followed the LORD God of Israel. (Your OUTCOME has everything to do with your faithfulness today.)*

#1. First of all, there is a REWARD being STORED: *Everything you do . . . God is keeping track of and will reward accordingly: Matt. 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven,*

#2. Second of all, there is a Lesson for a Blessin (The shortest road to blessing is found in OBEDIENCE.) *2 Tim. 4:7-8 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.*

Conclusion: Where do you stand today. At the FOOT of the mountain. HALF- way up. ALMOST at the top. (Keep climbing higher!)

Celebrating our Bible School: *Matt. 19:13-14* Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

#1. Not everyone was Happy with the Children: *13 . . . and the disciples rebuked them.* **(There are some that think our Bible School would be better if it wasn't for the children. - There is no Bible School without the children.)** Your Marriage would be better it wasn't for your spouse. Your job would be better if it wasn't for the customer. This church would be better if it wasn't for the congregation. **(As long as there are PEOPLE, there are PROBLEMS.)**

#2. Jesus Welcomed the Little Children: Jesus was glad to have the children come to Him. You can tell because of His reaction to the disciples who didn't want the children there.

#3. Jesus Commands Us to Welcome Children: *14* *But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me:* **(There are time when we are going to be inconvenience because of children, but don't refuse them to come.)**

a. Children will _____. (Talk out of turn; Make noise; Run; Bring dirt in; Put fingerprints on the windows.) *But Jesus said, Suffer* **(That does not mean that we accept ill behavior, but teach good.)**

#4. If Children are going to Come to Jesus they must be SOUGHT and BROUGHT: *Then were there brought unto him little children* **(Someone had to FIND the children and BRING the children.)** **(That why we have . . . Posters; Invites; Cars & Buses for transportation; Internet advertisement; Newspaper advertisement; Radio advertisement.)**

I. The Beauty of Bible School **(Seeing children come to Christ, and children growing in the Lord.):** *Ps. 29:2* Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD *in the beauty of holiness.* **(What is so beautiful about Bible School is this church being obedient to the COMMISSION God has given us . . . give everyone the Gospel of Jesus Christ.)**

#1. True Beauty is attached to Holiness, and Holiness is attached to bringing Glory to God's Name: Bring souls to Christ and teaching the doctrine of the Word of God. *Ps. 119:9* *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.* **(If cleanliness and next to godliness . . . then the Bible is just what is needed to clean the heart.)**

II. The Beginning of Bible School **(It is very interesting how the first Bible School was started.):** The year was 1894. A Sunday school teacher, **Mrs. D.T. Miles** felt she was too limited in her time to teach the Bible to children, so she began a daily Bible school during the summer. This school lasted four weeks and enrolled forty students.

Eliza Hawes also had the Bible School idea. She was the director of the children's department at Epiphany Baptist Church in New York City, who started an "Everyday Bible School" for slum children rented the only place available—a saloon—to run a Bible school for six weeks during the summer in 1898. Included in her daily Bible school were music, Bible Stories, Memory verses, games, crafts, drawing, cooking, and more. Hawes continued her efforts for seven years.

Dr. Robert Boville became aware of the Hawes' summer program and recommended it to other Baptist churches.

III. The Burglar of Bible School (The devil will do all he can to destroy Bible School.): *1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*

#1. He'll use the Guise of Skepticism: They'll say, "It won't make a difference." **Story:** D.L. Moody was criticized about his invitations. He asks how the man performed his. He didn't. "Well then", Moody said, "I like the way I do it better than the way you don't do it."

#2. He'll use the Guise of Sophistication: Some think that Bible School is beneath them. It's for children and I am an adult. **(I believe in putting the emphasis where God does, and He says, "for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Also He says, Mat. 18:3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. (So salvation is liken unto becoming as children, believing by faith.)**

#3. He'll use the Guise of Spirituality: Some will say that Bible School is just entertainment. That church is not to be a place of FUN. **(I believe we can have reverence for the Lord and still have fun.)** **The DEVIL is RELIGIOUS:** *2 Cor. 11:14-15 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; (The devil knows Scripture and even used the Bible against Jesus in the wilderness, but we use the whole Bible Scripture compared to Scripture.)*

IV. The Backing of Bible School (It's great to see God's people rally together for Bible School.): *Ps. 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* **(What does that mean? It means we PRAY as a church and we WORK as a church.)**

#1. Success is Found when God's people Work TOGETHER: There was success on the day of PENTECOST because God's people sought God and did a work for God.

V. The Belief of Bible School (That what we are doing, God will honor, and bless.): *Is. 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

#1. We are going to Trust God in the Matter and not _____. (Popular Opinions; How we Feel; or what we See.) *2 Cor. 5:7 (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)*

a. Your Senses will Lie to You: **(EARS) - Heard footsteps** (Old house cooling down at night.); **(EYES) - Saw a Buck** (Buck Fever); **(TOUCH) - Thought Bug was on me** (Piece of hair tickling me.); **(Taste) - Though it was Chicken** (Something else.); **(Smell) - Paint drying** (Wife's perfume.)

VI. The Blessing of Bible School: (1) There are the children brought to salvation. (2) There are the children who have grown in the Lord. (3) There is the impact that will be upon their adult lives because of Bible School. (4) There is the Parents who will be effected for Jesus because of the Children that came. . . . (5) There is also the FEELING that you have KNOWING that you did what you could for the glory of God **(That makes God happy, and you happy as well.)**

The WAY UP is DOWN (HUMBLE YOURSELVES) - James 4:10 *Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. (There is no place for spiritual pride in God's presence.)*

I. The Bible teaches us to Humble Yourself: *Jm. 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord,*

a. What is humility? Humility is the subservience to God's GLORY, subjection to God's WILL, and an assurance that without Him we can do nothing. (Without God we are NOTHING!): *Jn. 15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. (God does not Honour those who DESIRE to take His Glory as their own.)*

II. The Bible teaches us that Humility is to be Evident BEFORE GOD: *James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord (Humility is to be seen in God's SIGHT... everywhere!)*

III. The Bible teaches us that the WAY UP is DOWN (Humility has RESULTS): *James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.*

IV. The Bible ALSO teaches us that the WAY DOWN is to go UP (Pride has RESULTS): *16-17 But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin.*

#1. Ungodly SPEECH in verses 11-12: Christian should not run each other down, because in essence you're running yourself down. **(Story - Lady/Parking, left in gear. Ran self down.)**

#2. Ungodly PLANS in verses 13-16: Ungodly plans is any plan that leaves God OUT! Any time you are leaving God out of your plans, you are committing a serious offense against God.

#3. Ungodly NEGLECT in verse 17: With knowledge comes RESPONSIBILITY. **(It's not enough to STOP doing WRONG, we also need to STAR doing RIGHT.)**

V. ILLUSTRATION: If we take an EMPTY JAR and throw it on the water it will float. If we take the same jar and FILL the JAR it will go right to the bottom. (POINT = A Christian who is filled with himself is filled with nothing, but a Christian who is filled with the spirit of humility is filled with all the blessings of the grace of God.) **(The further he goes down, the higher God will lift him up. THE WAY UP is DOWN!)**

VI. The Bible teaches us that Humility has GODLY CHARACTERISTICS: If we are humble then we will demonstrate these traits in our lives.

#1. The Humble man submits to the will of God (v.7): *Submit yourselves therefore to God. (Humility begins by giving God first place in our decisions, our action and our motivations.)*

#2. The Humble man repents of his sins (v.8) ... *Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. (We demonstrate pride when we are unwilling to admit and correct wrong in our lives.)* Cleanse Hands = Actions; Purify Hearts = Thoughts, Intentions.

a. A Humble Man has the RIGHT KIND of a HEART: *Ps. 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. (Sacrifices of God = For us to have a BROKEN SPIRIT before God; Broken Spirit = A broken & contrite Heart; CONTRITE = Is a heart that is BROKEN; CRUSHED; HUMBLER before God. (Evident from previous verses in chapter 51.)*

#3. The Humble Man refuses to speak evil of his brother in the Lord (v.11): *Speak not evil one of another, brethren. (He leaves that judgment to God.) (Don't Slander, Gossip, Backbite.)*

#4. The Humble Man refuses to boast about what he is going to do (v.13-16): *14 Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.*

a. The Tongue Talks, but does NOTHING but gets us into LOTS of TROUBLE: *6-8 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame;*

#5. The Humble Man recognizes that his every failure to do good is sin (v.17): *Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. (With Knowledge comes Responsibility.)*

CONCLUSION: If you SEEK to have what the Bible calls a HUMBLE SPIRIT , God will bless you, and LIFT you up. If you RUN after PRIDE, you will fall right to the BOTTOM.

The WAY UP is DOWN (HUMBLE YOURSELVES) - *James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up. (There is no place for spiritual pride in God's presence.)*