

# Life's Little Lessons

## Just Six Inches Deep

"He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it dried up; so He led them through the depths, as through the wilderness. He saved them from the hand of him who hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy. The waters covered their enemies; there was not one of them left" (Psalm 106:9-11).

A teacher was doing her best to discredit the miracles of the Bible. She said, "Take, for instance, the crossing of the Red Sea. We know this body of water was only 6 inches deep." Immediately, from the back of the room came the remark, "Praise God for the miracle!" Annoyed, the teacher asked, "What miracle?" "Well," explained the boy, "the Lord must have drowned the whole Egyptian army in just 6 inches of water!"

## The Back of the Rug

"Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men!" (Psalm 107:15). When we look on the back of a handmade oriental rug, we see a clashing chaos of confusing color and thousands of knots. Instead of an object of beauty and admiration, if all we saw was the back of the rug, we might consider it a worthless mess of threads. However, turn the rug over and, suddenly, we appreciate the intricate colorful design and the skill of the rug maker.

Likewise, when we are looking at only the back of the rug in our lives, we will not give thanks for the bounty and richness of God's blessings. We need to look at the front of the rug and appreciate and give thanks for God's goodness. We should not allow the problems, distractions, and irritations of life rob us of the joyful spirit. (From Wayne Greeson)

## 1000 Years Old

In his book *Long for This World*, Jonathan Weiner writes about science's promise to radically extend how long we live. At the center of the book is English scientist Aubrey de Grey, who predicts that science will one day offer us 1,000-year lifespans. Aubrey claims that molecular biology has finally placed a cure for aging within our reach.

But what difference does it make if, after living 1,000 years, we will eventually die anyway? De Grey's prediction only postpones facing the ultimate question of what happens when we die. It does not answer it.

The Scriptures tell us that death is not the end of our existence. Instead, we are assured that everyone will stand before Christ—believers for their works and nonbelievers for their rejection of Him (John 5:25-29; Rev. 20:11-15). All of us are sinners and in need of forgiveness. And only Christ's death on the cross has provided forgiveness for all who believe (Rom. 3:23; 6:23). The Bible says, "It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment" (Heb. 9:27). Our appointed face-to-face encounter with God puts everything in perspective. So whether we live 70 years or 1,000, the issue of eternity is the same: "Prepare to meet your God!" (Amos 4:12).

## Public Opinion Polls

It doesn't matter what you think. We live in an age dominated by all kinds of public opinion polls. Decisions are being driven by the crowd, and some of that is good. Surveys can inform us about people's experiences with products, helping us make wiser purchases. Opinion polls can give government officials a sense of how their policy initiatives will be received. While information gleaned is a matter of personal opinion, it can be helpful in shaping decision-making on a variety of levels.

But when it comes to the most important question for all eternity, a public opinion poll cannot give us the answer. We must answer for ourselves. In Matthew 16, Jesus took His disciples to Caesarea Philippi and asked a question about public opinion: "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" (v.13). The answers were varied, and all were complimentary—but none was adequate.

That's why Jesus then asked His disciples, "But who do you say that I am?" (v.15). Peter got the answer right: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (v.16).

Public opinion can help answer certain questions, but not the one question that will determine your eternity: Who do you say that Jesus is? If you trust and obey the Scriptures, you will have eternal life. Opinion is no substitute for the truth of God's Word.

### **Friendship with Jesus**

Someone has defined friendship as "knowing the heart of another and sharing one's own heart with another." We share our hearts with those we trust, and trust those who care about us. We confide in our friends because we have confidence that they will use the information to help us, not harm us. They in turn confide in us for the same reason.

We often refer to Jesus as our friend because we know that He wants what is best for us. We confide in Him because we trust Him. But have you ever considered that Jesus confides in His people? Jesus began calling His disciples friends rather than servants because He had entrusted them with everything He had heard from His Father (John 15:15). Jesus trusted the disciples to use the information for the good of His Father's kingdom.

Although we know that Jesus is our friend, can we say that we are His friends? Do we listen to Him? Or do we only want Him to listen to us? Do we want to know what's on His heart? Or do we only want to tell Him what's on ours? To be a friend of Jesus, we need to listen to what He wants us to know and then use the information to bring others into friendship with Him. Christ's friendship calls for our faithfulness.

### **Idaho**

The state's name, "Idaho," according to one legend, comes from a Shoshone Indian word, "ee-dah-how." When translated into English, it means something like, "Behold! The sun rising over the mountain." I often think of that when the sun breaks over the eastern peaks and spills light and life into our valley.

Also, I think of Malachi's promise: "The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings" (Mal. 4:2). This is God's irrevocable promise that our Lord Jesus will come again and all creation "will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21).

Each new sunrise is a reminder of that eternal morning when "bright heaven's Sun" will arise with healing in His wings. Then everything that has been made will be made over and made irrevocably right. There will be no throbbing backs or knees, no financial struggles, no losses, no aging. One Bible version says that when Jesus returns we will "go out and leap like calves released from the stall" (Mal. 4:2). This is my highest imagination and my hope. Jesus said, "Surely I am coming quickly" (Rev. 22:20). Even so, come, Lord Jesus! You have reason for optimism if you're looking for Christ's return.

### **Zebras and Wildebeests**

Stopping so we could watch the zebras and wildebeests migrating from Masai Mara to Serengeti in Kenya, the guide explained that the two massive herds travel together because the zebras have good eyesight but a poor sense of smell, and the wildebeests have bad eyesight but a good sense of smell. By traveling together, both are less vulnerable to predators.

Just as God makes animals with different strengths and weaknesses, He makes people the same way. God made us to be dependent not only on Him but also on one another. The apostle Paul elaborated on this idea in his letter to the church in Corinth. As members of the body of Christ, we all have different gifts and abilities (1Cor. 12:12-31). The church is healthy only when we work together, look out for each other, and use our strengths to benefit one another. We can go a lot further together than we can alone.