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# ◆ THE EDIFIER ◆

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## Becoming 'as little children'



*“At that time the disciples came to Jesus saying, ‘Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?’. Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, **unless you are converted and become as little children**, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.’” Matthew 18:1-3*

I was born with my umbilical chord wrapped around my neck for 49 hours, and as a result I have cerebral palsy. I have lived most of my life being totally dependant on others for my every physical need.

Recently, Jesus’ words in the above passage were really brought home to me, and to my friends, when we studied the above passage. We reflected upon the meaning of ‘becoming as little children’. We talked about how little children have to humbly trust, depend and totally rely on their parents and guardians. We discussed their innocence, inquisitiveness, submission to and love for their parents. I also later noted how little children really have no real choice

other than total dependence.

I was then caused to reflect upon my own life. What choice did I have, but to totally depend on family, carers, support workers and friends? They are effectively my arms and my legs. My arms are literally tied up because of my spasms and I have not supported myself on my legs for decades. I was now really starting to relate to the phrase Jesus used (becoming ‘as little children’), as that was and is how I physically live my life every day. I realized that, even as an adult, I had a special insight to share with others on being like a little child.

It has not been an easy life. Being mentally sharp and alert you can just imagine my frustration at times. It has been an awful struggle. In many ways my life has been more unpleasant than the life of a little child. At least most little children only have to trust and depend on a few close relatives. From week to week I have numerous different carers who attend to all my physical needs, including my most basic needs of eating, drinking and bathing. Whilst being fed, the childish tactic “Open wide, here comes the choo-choo train” has even been used on me. I thank God though

for those who assist and care for me and continue to pray for them.

Reflecting upon my life, the words of Jesus really hit me. What really impacts me more, however, is seeing the deeper meaning Jesus has for us all. It impacts all of us whether we like it or not.

*Unless we become as little children toward God we will not enter the kingdom of heaven!* Based on my experiences, I now see this to mean that unless we are prepared to humble ourselves and allow God to be our arms and our legs (our strength) and unless we are willing to depend upon Him for everything, everyday, and to totally trust the way He wants to lead us, which includes obedience, (just like me with my carers etc), then forget the kingdom of heaven.

Just as I have no choice but to trust my carers, we have no choice but to trust God, if we

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*A magazine dedicated to uplifting and transforming peoples lives through the uncompromised word of God.*

## Why God Doesn't Tell Us Everything

Have you ever wondered why God didn't in the Bible give us all the detail about every situation we face so that there would be no misunderstanding or grey areas? Is it because the 'devil is in the detail'? I don't think so. Let me suggest though four reasons why God has not been explicit in giving us all the detail for every situation we might face in life.

Firstly, the Bible would be too big and much too heavy. We would need a forklift truck to get our Bibles in our truck to get to church. The church would need to be much bigger and the car park too. Can you just imagine the already very difficult task of Bible translators being nigh impossible?

Secondly, a more important reason is that God does not want the Bible to be our God. He wants to be our God. He wants us to have a relationship with Him directly, not just through His book. If the Bible had all the clear answers, how much less of a need do you think we would feel for communing with God?

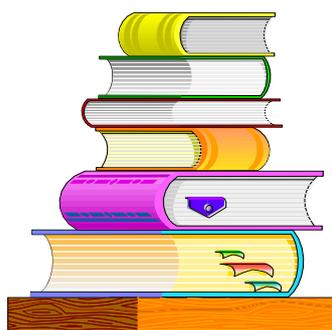
Imagine if our natural Father said, "Here Sam, here Sally, you are old enough to read now; everything you need to know about me and from me is in that book over there that the man with the fork lift truck is delivering to your bedroom. I am going away for 10 years. See you". But Sam and Sally say, "We don't

think you are being a very good Father. Don't you want to have a relationship with us? We want to have a relationship with you". Let us have a relationship with God.

Thirdly, God is not a spoon-feeder. He knows that we will not develop properly if He's like that. We would get lazy, not studying, not contemplating and not seeking to grow. We would not exercise our own minds, or seek the leading of the Holy Spirit. There is a very important scripture in Hebrews about maturity and I think we can make a point from it about spoon-feeding. Hebrews 5:14 says:

*"But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil".*

How does this say we reach full age or maturity - by God giving us all the answers on a silver platter? No; by using our own senses! Let's use them.



One final reason why I believe God does not detail every possible thing in the Bible for us is because He wants to test our hearts, or our sincerity and honesty towards Him. The greyest issues in the Bible I believe are the ones that are clouded by our own interests and

pleasures. There are some things in the Bible that we will not understand until we are prepared to put aside what our flesh wants to be true. Has anyone, for example, ever questioned why God did not cause the New Testament writers to expressly write in the clearest of words 'the Sabbath will continue to be observed on Saturday', or 'the Sabbath will now be changed from the seventh day to the first day' or 'the Sabbath is now every day or any day you want? God does test the sincerity of our hearts and our willingness to search the scriptures and be led by His Holy Spirit.

Let's do it! Let's search the scriptures and be led by the Holy Spirit.

**David Kidd**

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*Phil 4:8*

*Finally, brethren,  
whatever things are true,  
whatever things are noble,  
whatever things are just,  
whatever things are pure,  
whatever things are lovely,  
whatever things are of  
good report, if there is any  
virtue and if there is  
anything praiseworthy —  
meditate on these things.*

*NKJV*



## THE MARRIAGE GAP



As the divorce rate at the top of society tumbles and rises at the bottom, the widening ‘marriage gap’ is breeding inequality.

According to research findings reported in the Economist magazine, there is a widening gulf between how the best and least educated, approach marriage and child rearing.

Should we care and does this matter?

The answer is, yes, it does matter. Both to all concerned parties within the ‘family unit’, and the economy as a whole. For instance, the findings of several research sources have found that the Marriage Gap is the primary source of America's notorious and widening financial inequality. Similar findings are also emerging to support the same effects in Australia.

Some may find these effects surprising, since they are contrary to widely held beliefs on marriage. Furthermore, they are quite specific in who bears the greatest cost:

- In a complete reversal of the ‘try before you buy’ view, co-habiting couples who live together before marriage are twice as likely to divorce as those who don’t.
- Middle-class children reared by two biological parents were found to be "socialised for success." That is, they generally do better at school, get better jobs and go on to create intact families of their own.
- Children of single parents and broken families on the other hand do worse in school, get lower paid jobs and go on to have children out of wedlock.

Concerning the financial effects:

- 92% of children whose families earn more than \$75,000 a year live with two parents (including step parents).
- Of those Families earning less than \$15,000 only 20% of children live with two parents.
- While most children in single-parent homes grow up without serious problems, as a cohort group they are more than five times as likely to be poor as those who live with two biological parents.

Changes in family structure thus have a large impact on the economy. Even after controlling for race, family background and IQ, children of single mothers do worse in school than children of married parents. And children who do not live with both biological parents are twice as likely to drop out of high school and have behavioural or psychological problems.

However, the benefits of marriage have also been shown to improve the circumstance of single mothers. Of those who married before the baby was six months old, only half were likely to be raising their children in poverty five years later as those who did not marry.

Another amazing result demonstrating the financial power of marriage was that of those who marry "till death do us part" end up, on average, four times richer than those who never marry, singles included.

Marriage, it turns out, IS more than a piece of paper. According to the findings, marriage is a "wealth-generating institution". For a start, Marriage provides economies of scale – two can live more cheaply than one. Or as King Solomon said, *“Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work.”* And *“If two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone?”* (Ecc 4).

Christians of course recognise marriage as an institution ordained by God, and knowing the sanctity with which God bestows on it as His foundation for all societies, it would be reasonable to assume he has blessed it with financial success. *“Remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the power to produce wealth”* (Deut 8:18),

Marriage affects people’s behaviour differently. Those who work hard, plan for the future and have good interpersonal skills are more likely to marry and stay married. It encourages both parties to save and invest more for the future, with each safe-guarding the

other against falling sick or losing a job. *“If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up!”* (Ecc 4:10).

Marriage also promotes the division of labour. Specialisation. This was the basis of the early pioneering economist Adam Smith back in the late 1700’s. In his ground breaking work ‘The Wealth of Nations’ he spoke of the competitive advantage that nations could establish through specialisation. This lies at the heart of international trade even today. Specialisation was also the catalyst that fuelled the industrial revolution. Simply put, when you specialise you get better at what you do, and you also produce more. But specialisation’s origins first occurred well before the industrialisation of Europe and America.

It started back in the garden of Eden when God created Eve, and has continued through to the establishment and running of His church where He places each member according to His special purpose.

### Co-habiting couples

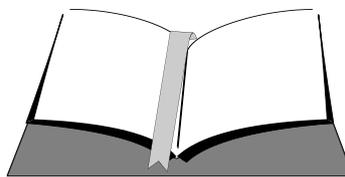
Co-habiting couples have the same number of hands as married couples, and it is often thought that only the marriage certificate is what distinguishes them from married couples. They therefore ought to make equally good parents, and many do. However, according to the research findings, on average, the children of co-habiting

couples do worse by nearly every measure. One reason is that such relationships are less stable. Those who live together before marriage are more likely to divorce.

The second reason is inertia. While women see living together as a prelude to marriage, men usually view the arrangement as being something more temporary. With no specific commitment it is easier to drift into living together than it is to drift into marriage. “But once a couple is living together, it is harder to split up than if they were merely dating. Many men end up married to women they would not have married if they hadn’t been living together.”

God created and ordained marriage. *“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”* (Genesis 2:24 He blessed marriage, and determined it to be the best arrangement for the pinnacle of His creation.

*Richard Todd*



## **Surprising things about the Bible**

Here are just a few things for you to check out. They may seem to be minor points, but let’s be faithful even in little things as Jesus said “He who

is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much” Luke 16:10.

Did Delilah physically cut off Samson’s hair? Consider Judges 16:19.

Does the Bible say that Jesus fell beneath the cross? Consider Matthew 27:31-32, Mark 15:20-21, Luke 23:25-26 and John 19:16-17.

Can you find any reference in the Bible to Noah being mocked whilst he was building the ark? (It is probable he was, but are we told that he was?). Did it take 120 years for the ark to be built? Consider Noah’s age when he begat his sons, his age when the flood waters came and his sons being old enough to have wives (see Gen 5:32, 6:10-18 & 7:6). Did the ark come to rest on a specific mountain called Mt Ararat? (See Genesis 8:4).

When the Bible refers to ‘eternal fire’ and fire that cannot be quenched, or unquenchable fire, does it actually mean that such fires will never ever stop, or does it simply mean that no man will be able to put them out before they have destroyed all that God intends them to destroy? Consider Jude 7, Jeremiah 7:20, 17:27, 21:10-14 & 52:12-13 & Matthew 10:28. Also check carefully the claim that is so often made that Jesus referred to hell much more than heaven.

Did the Israelites only eat manna and quail in their forty years in the wilderness? Consider Exodus 16:35 and Numbers 11:4-6, but also Deut. 2:6 & 28-29, Numbers 9:1-5, 9-12, 32:1. Consider also Leviticus 7:37-38, and then read the previous chapters noting the kind of foods they had available for offerings ‘to the Lord in the wilderness of Sinai’ (Lev.7:38).

When the Bible speaks of lifting Jesus up so that all men are drawn to Him, in context is it talking about praising or exalting Jesus, or something else? See John 12:32 & esp. v33.

When Eve ate of the forbidden 'fruit' (note nowhere are we told what the fruit was) was she with Adam, or was he off somewhere else? Consider Genesis 3:4-7.

When the King James Bible says in Genesis 2:18 & 20 that God made Adam a help 'meet' for him i.e. a women, what does 'meet' mean? Does it mean 'mate'?

Does the Bible say explicitly that Jesus was born in a manger? Contemplate Luke 2:7

Does the Bible say that the prodigal ate the swine's food, or did he come to his senses before eating it? See Luke 15:16-17

Is the phrase 'by His (Jesus') stripes we are healed' referring to physical healing as so many people say over and over again, or spiritual healing/atonement? Consider Isaiah 53:5-6 and 1 Peter 2:24-25 noting the connective 'For' in verse 25.

I hope you will take the time to study the material above because I believe you will get a few surprises and an important lesson will be learned. Many times we believe things because we have heard them repeated over and over again without checking them. Errors often get passed on this way. Whilst most of the points above may be minor, it is easy to conceive how the same process of error occurs in relation to much

*Continued on page six*

## Gardening God's Way



**Plant three rows of peas:  
Peace of mind  
Peace of heart  
Peace of soul**

**Plant four rows of squash:  
Squash gossip  
Squash indifference  
Squash grumbling  
Squash selfishness**

**Plant four rows of lettuce:  
Lettuce be faithful  
Lettuce be kind  
Lettuce be obedient  
Lettuce really love one another**

**No garden should be without turnips:  
Turnip for meetings  
Turnip for service  
Turnip to help one another**

**Water freely with patience and Cultivate  
with love.**

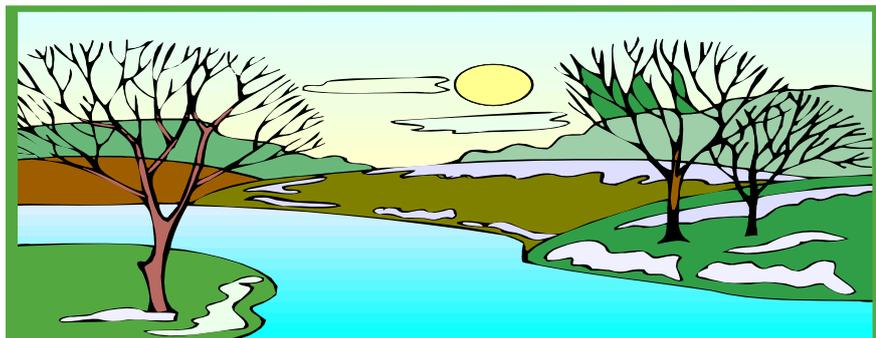
**There is abundance in your garden.....  
Because you reap what you sow.**

**To conclude our garden, We must have  
thyme:  
Thyme for God  
Thyme for study  
Thyme for prayer**

**Pretty nice garden!**

*author unknown*





**In the quietness talk with God.**

**Tell Him thank you for something  
good in your life.**

**Share some personal need  
and ask His help.**

**Talk with Him about someone else  
and your concern for them.**

**Speak.**

**He's listening.**

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*Continued from page one*

want to be in the kingdom of heaven. Just as it has been a struggle for me physically, each and every day, it will not always be easy for us to trust God and go His way. Nevertheless, a comforting thought is that if God had the power to make the entire universe, He has more than enough strength to see me through, or you for that matter.

It is also comforting to know that if God and Jesus were willing to suffer and sacrifice so much for us, and to pay such a high price for us, then our eternal future is secure in them.

He will never leave us or forsake us. Won't you join me on this incredible journey to paradise?

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever shall believe in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life".*

*Linda Norcott (with David Kidd)*

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bigger issues. Let's heed the admonition Paul gave Timothy to be diligent and to rightly divide the word of truth. If we don't, it may be embarrassing, or even worse.

[Acknowledgement and thanks is given to Ralph Woodrow who has drawn my attention to many of the above things in his book 'Over 500 Amazing Discoveries Within the Book of Books']

***David Kidd***

# The Youth Section



## New Testament Names

All the words listed below are in the puzzle - left, right, up, down or diagonally.

A	N	D	R	E	W	Z	J	P	I	L	I	H	P	B
W	E	A	E	E	A	G	A	B	R	I	E	L	A	A
E	H	U	L	S	L	U	E	C	I	N	U	E	Q	R
H	P	G	T	L	L	I	F	Y	C	S	T	V	U	N
T	E	U	A	Y	I	S	Z	E	H	H	I	I	I	A
T	T	S	B	C	C	S	G	A	L	T	A	L	L	B
A	S	T	I	N	S	H	U	A	B	I	O	E	A	A
M	S	U	T	A	I	A	U	R	M	E	X	M	U	S
I	S	S	H	A	R	C	I	S	D	A	T	R	I	S
C	A	U	A	N	P	I	O	H	N	L	L	H	H	T
H	L	S	R	N	O	L	H	D	T	H	U	I	P	J
A	O	A	I	A	L	M	E	P	E	T	O	A	E	U
E	C	N	H	O	Z	R	I	U	P	M	A	J	S	L
L	I	N	P	J	M	A	R	T	H	A	U	M	O	I
A	N	A	N	I	A	S	L	L	O	I	S	S	J	A

Alexander, Ananias, Andrew, Apollos, Aquila, Augustus, Barnabas, Drusilla, Elizabeth, Eunice, Eutychus, Felix, Gabriel, Gamaliel, Joanna, John, Joseph, Julia, Lazarus, Levi, Lois, Martha, Matthew, Matthias, Michael, Nicodemus, Nicolas, Paul, Philip, Priscilla, Sapphira, Saul, Silas, Stephen, Susanna, Tabitha, Timon, Timothy, Zacchaeus

## Insights From the Past

### THE BIBLE CHRIST



## *Is the Sabbath for Christians?*

**In this booklet the aim is to share with you what the Bible says about the origin of the Sabbath, what the Sabbath means, and how we are instructed to observe it. Here also are the results of a careful study of the New Testament's presentation of Sabbath observance and how the early Christian church regarded it.**

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What our Lord thought of Himself is very clearly and strongly set forth in series of *I ams*, contained in the Gospel of John. To the woman of Samaria, He said: "I that speak unto thee am *he*" [the Messiah] ( John 4 : 26; compare Matthew 26:63, 64; Mark 14:61, 62). To the disciples in a storm on the Sea of Galilee, He said: "It is I [literally, *I am*], be not afraid" ( John 6:20). To the Jews in the synagogue at Capernaum, He said: "I am that bread of life .... I am the living bread which came down from heaven" ( John 6:48, 51). To the Jews at the feast of tabernacles, He said: "I am the light of the world" ( John 8:12; compare chapter 1:4, 5, 9; 3:19; 9:5; 12:35, 36, 46). To the Jews again at the same feast, He said: "Before Abraham was, I am" ( John 8:58; compare Exodus 3:14; John 17:5, 24; Colossians 1:17; Revelation 1:8). To the Jews after the feast, He said: "I am the door of the sheep . . . I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" ( John 10:7, 11; compare Isaiah 40:11; Ezekiel 37:24; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25 and 5:4). To the weeping Martha, whose brother had just died, He said: "I am the resurrection and the life" ( John 11:25). To the disciples, whose feet He had washed in the upper room the night before His death, He said: "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am" ( John 13:13; compare Matthew 23:8; Luke 6:46; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 12:3; Philippians 2:11). In answer to the question of Thomas in the same room and on the same occasion, He said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me" ( John 14:6; compare Hebrews 9:8-12). He also said on the same occasion to His disciples: "I am the true vine and my Father is the husbandman [the vine dresser] . . . I am the vine, ye are the branches" ( John 15 : 1 - 5).

When He stood before the Jewish Sanhedrin and was asked by Caiaphas, the high priest, whether He was "the Christ, the Son of the Blessed," He said: I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" ( Mark 14:61, 62). These are examples of the self assertion of Jesus of Nazareth. The "I ams" that fell from His lips on sundry occasions, taken in connection with the annexed predicates, clearly present Jesus Christ in the language of a Christian writer.

**EDITOR'S NOTE :** *The above article appeared in the October 16, 1900 issue of the Sabbath Advocate and Herald of the Advent, an earlier name for the Bible Advocate magazine. The article was written by Eugene B. Willard.*