

Faith Of Our Youth

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"The Voice of Young Christian Faith"

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HOLOGRAM CHRISTIANS

by Shane Lee

All the world is just a stage and we are merely players, pretenders and por-trayers." This is a line that has Shakespearean origin that's used in a song by the band Rush. When looking at the world from a secular view this state-ment holds some truths. However we must be careful as Christians not fall into this trap. There are many things that plague the Christian life. A general lack of discipline is one of the worst.

Richard Taylor wrote in the Disciplined Life, "...respectable Christians that would be horrified at the thought of touching liquor, or indulging in gross immorality...are nevertheless undisciplined, and the fatal weakness is unmasked in the day of trial and adversity." There are many who don't do anything "wrong," but they don't do anything "right." Being Christian is a full time job that should not only consume us, but shape who we are. I Thes. 2:4 speaks of how we are here not to please man but God. That is why we are here, to please God.

God despises undisciplined be-havior. The story of the prodigal son comes to mind. But that is a little different kind of discipline than what

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Wisdom of our Elders

by Marvin Ingle

Along with the "man after God's own heart," I can say, "I have been young, and now I am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." It has been my experience that when I took the advice of Christ—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteous-ness"—that all things worked for good (although there were times, I admit, that it seemed impossible for me to see how that could happen).

Setting your life on a course that brings the promise and the reality of eternal life is a decision only you can make; as Peter told those who cried "What shall we do?" at Pentecost, "Save yourselves from this undone generation". So each of you must do your own reading, your own studying, indeed, your own thinking; others may advise you, love you, counsel you, and teach you in the truth of God—but, in the final analyses, YOU decide whether or not you will follow Jesus. If the commitment is yours, the follow-up of obedience will be easier. Don't let someone persuade you to "go through the motions" for we are told every true Christian must be "fully persuaded in his own mind"; he must "obey FROM THE HEART that form of doctrine de-livered to them" from Jesus.

Once you have conceived the word, taken it and kept it in your mind, you will, of course, be grateful, ready to repent of sin, willingly confess His name before men, and submit to bap-

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Fourth Man In The Fire

by Jeffrey Allen

One of the great things about the bible is that you can always learn something new when studying it. That even goes for Bible stories that are taught to small children.

Even though the story may have been heard or read several times, there is usually a new slant or a new idea that appears that wasn't noticed before when studying that story again. One of my favorite stories from the Old Testa-ment is the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. This is a story that is often told to small children, but there are a lot of good lessons to be learned from this story for the young & old alike.

If you are curious of the details of this story, the scriptures record these events in Daniel, the third chapter. Most of us are familiar with the story of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego: Three young Israelite men who were in captivity in Babylon who were forced to make a decision, forced to stand up for what they believed, and forced to decide who to serve, God or man. There are several lessons that are learned easily from this story such as: 1) serve no man or being other than God himself, 2) have faith in the Lord and he will be there for you. I'd like to examine a couple of other lessons that are also evident in this story.

For starters, think of the immense pressure that was on the three of them. We don't know exactly how many peo-

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Wonderful Memories Will Last Through the Years

by Stephanie L. Moody

Two weeks of fellowship, rejoicing, and praise.

With love and laughter our hearts did raise.

Though meditating thought did bring on some tears,

Those wonderful memories will last through the years.

Encouragement we've received from many great men.

The actual number heard from is one more than ten.

From angels, family and the tried man,
To priests, children and "I think I can.

To God we daily prayed and sang.

Enthusiastically our voices joyously rang.

Relationship, Kings and marriage were discussed those days,

Ephesians, flesh, spirit, and the seven churches ways.

Anger, steadfastness, and commitment were dealt with at night.

We even saw ourselves in a casket, quite a sobering sight.

Along with the study there was fun and games for all.

Bowling, skating, miniature golf, and basketball.

At the Y everyone was locked in real tight,

And, of course, one evening there was a water fight,

With balloons and buckets, oh, and don't forget

Wading pools are even better yet.

Wednesday night talent will be remembered long.

The show had jokes, skits, and a lot of song.

So, with two weeks of fellowship, rejoicing, and praise.

With love and laughter our hearts did raise.

Though meditating thoughts did bring on some tears,

Those wonderful memories will last through the years



Vandalia, IA Church of Christ

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tism to be washed from your sins by the blood of Christ. As you were physically created by God: your mother, according to God's plan, provided the egg from which you came; your father, of course, fertilized that egg; and with God's help you were fashioned in the womb under your mother's heart. When she could no longer carry you, she was moved to cast you forth, and you were separated from her—and God "breathed into your nostrils the breath of life—and you became a living soul." Your mind, your spirit, and your body were just as God wanted them—to give a unique picture of Him on the earth. He has placed within you the potential to know and do many wonderful things; few of us know our real capacity for learning, for understanding, for wisdom, for feeling or for fruitful production—for glorifying Him.

A wise man once said, "Make it thy business to **know thyself**, which is the most difficult lesson in the world." Not many men **know** whether they are five-talent men, two-talent men, or one-talent men; but all must assuredly admit to the Creator and other men—they were not left out. Some discover their strengths and weaknesses by trial-and-error; others accept whatever their fellows tell them; and some imagine themselves to be somebody when they are really nobody. A very wise man provided the means by which we can think of ourselves as we ought: "There are four sorts of men:

- (1) *He who knows not and knows not he knows not; he is a fool—shun him.*
- (2) *He who knows not and knows he knows not; he is simple—teach him.*
- (3) *He who knows and knows not he knows; he is asleep—wake him.*
- (4) *He who knows and knows he knows; he is wise—follow him."*

David was a 4; He knew that with God's help, he had killed a lion and a bear (both beyond normal human performance: and, therefore, when he faced his Goliath, he could with all confidence predict his victory. He knew and knew that he knew, from whence his strength had come. We, too, can know and know that we know—but, because it is not of ourselves—and with all confidence be assured that "with God" all things are possible.

The world often challenges us to stand for what we believe or be destroyed. II Tim. 1:7... "God has not

given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

The three Hebrew children were commanded by Nebuchadnezzar the king, when they heard the music, to "fall down and worship the image: or "be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace," and they replied boldly and full of faith: "We are not careful to answer thee... If it be His will, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King, that **WE WILL NOT** serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." What courage! What faith! What confidence in their knowledge of God! What indignation at the very suggestion!

Joshua reminded Israel that each of them must choose for himself whether he would serve the Great God of Heaven—or the little gods of men's imagination and making. But he left no doubt in their minds about himself, by saying: "Choose you this day whom ye will serve;...but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Paul promised us Christians—who dare to be a Daniel, who set our minds to serve the living God—Heb. 13:5... for He hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, So that we may boldly say, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what men shall do to me."

Ezra 7:10... "Ezra had prepared his heart; with three goals for his life: (1) "to seek the law of the Lord, (2) and to do it, and (3) to teach to Israel statutes and judgements." What a worthy ambition for anyone at any age.

Your bodies are constantly undergoing change, as a matter of fact, you are, indeed, a "new man" every seven years. During adolescence and early adulthood, one sometimes comes to think there's a revolution going on within him (Strangely enough, the Apostle Paul still had that warring inside him when he was an old man.) Remember that God made your body, and (with all the changes going on) He is preparing you for greater physical and spiritual fulfillment. We are "fearfully and wonderfully made." God knows the drives you have; He gave them to you to be used in honor to you and to Him.

But when we would do good, evil is always present; since Eve the devil is at our elbow, offering an alternative lifestyle. He desires to "sift us like wheat": As with Job, he might shake your faith by taking away all visible

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