

# Faith Of Our Youth

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"The Voice of Young Christian Faith"

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## Here is your Mother

by Brad Tutterow

Was Jesus a good baby? Was he fussy or prone to colic? How many times did Mary wake up in the middle of the night to care for her screaming child? How many times did a frightened baby Jesus cling to his mother's clothing for comfort?

We don't know the answers to these questions, but we do know that Mary cared for and loved her child, because that's what mothers do. Just as infants are the most selfish of creatures, mothers are the most selfless creatures that God has ever created. For the infant that cannot think of anything but his own wants, God created the perfect match – the mother willing to give of herself to meet those needs.

The value of a mother is one of the many stories that can be told with the death of Jesus Christ. As Mary's little boy bled for the sins of an entire world, she stood there and watched him die. And in deep agony we can't even fathom, Jesus reflected on his mother. With the weight of a planet's sin on him, Jesus spoke, "Dear woman, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." (Jn 19:26,27) For all the sleepless nights and sacrifices, Jesus made sure someone looked after Mom.

It is easy to take a good mother for granted. The good mother requires no payment or thanks for her services; they are given freely. But we can take from Jesus' example and make sure someone looks after Mom. She deserves it.



Member of Prince Rd. Church of Christ

Regardless of one's age, Satan is always trying to affect our Christian walk with his three D's: DOUBT, DISCOURAGEMENT, AND DESPAIR.

1. DOUBT - uncertainty, inclination not to believe or accept. "Is there a God? Does he care for me? Does he answer prayer? Where is justice?" All good questions that go through all of our minds at one time or another. Seeds of doubt sown by Satan. James 1:2-6 tells us we are to consider it pure joy when one faces trials. Why? Because the testing of one's faith develops perseverance. We are to ask of God believing and NOT DOUBTING. Doubting isn't abnormal, but what do we do about our doubts is the important thing. Think of Peter, the disciples, Rhoda and Thomas as the scriptures give us examples of each and how they handled their doubt. Jesus' admonition to Thomas in John 20:27, "stop doubting and believe."

Doubting is a negative response. Many times the easier response. Jesus told his disciples in Matt. 21:21-22, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, God, throw yourself into the sea, and it will be done. If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer." Doubt is a very strong tool of Satan. Don't let him use it on you!

2. DISCOURAGEMENT - deprived of courage or confidence, hinder by inspiring fear of consequences. "Oh, what's the use? Don't get anywhere anyway. No one really cares." Another tool of Satan's. How many souls fall away due to discouragement? In the parable of the sower, the seed

(See "WISDOM" on page 3)

### inside...

The Fork in the Road  
As the Ark Turns  
Born With It?  
Minor Matters

by Lisa Power  
by Randy Ingle  
by Dan Huff  
by Louis Garbi

page 4  
pages 4-5  
pages 5-6  
page 6

# Just Shoot Some Hoops

by Matt Clark

Just recently, while I was driving to my morning classes, I witnessed a sight which woke something up inside me. As I was driving on a highway, a car pulled directly in front of the car next to me, causing the driver to slam on his brakes. That same driver quickly began to tailgate the car which had just pulled in front of him. As I passed them, I noticed that there was less than a foot between the two bumpers. I looked at the man who was doing the tailgating and saw nothing but anger in the man's eyes. This made me realize that I have the very same problem. I have had people pull out onto a busy road in front of me causing me to brake. As a natural response, I accelerate to get just as close as I can to the car in front of me. That day, though, those two drivers made me realize that sometimes I do not control my anger the way I should.

*"Jesus controlled His anger, and in doing so, gave us a perfect example of how we can control our anger."*

Anger is a very powerful emotion that can vary in intensity from mild irritation to intense fury and rage. Anger can be caused by both external and internal events. You could become angry at a specific person (such as a co-worker, a fellow student, or a parent), an event (such as a traffic jam, a bad test grade, or your favorite sports team losing a big game), or your anger could be caused by worrying about your personal problems. Memories of traumatic or enraging events can also trigger angry feelings.

As Christians, it is very important for us to try to control our anger; because, if we let our anger build up, we could "lose it." By "lose it" I mean lose your temper, and you could find yourself doing things you do not normally do. This could be swearing, hitting, kicking, breaking things, or a variety of other actions which are unacceptable for a Christian.

Now do not get the wrong idea, I am not saying that you should keep all of your anger bottled up inside you. That is almost just as bad as "losing it." Consider a bottle of pop. If you unscrew the cap without shaking the bottle, the air comes out at a normal rate and you can enjoy your pop. On the other hand, if you shake that bottle of pop first and then unscrew the cap, the air pressure inside the bottle is going to rise, the fizz and pop inside is going to explode out from the bottle, and you are going to have a big mess to clean up. If we let our anger build up inside us, it is going to explode just like the shaken bottle of pop. If we let our anger out before it builds up, then we should be safe, and we will

not have a big mess to clean up later. Remember the example of Jesus and the money-changers in John 2:13-16.

"When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple courts he found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!" (NIV)

In this passage Jesus was obviously angry at the money-changers, but He did not "lose it." Jesus controlled His anger, and in doing so, gave us a perfect example of how we can control our anger. Since we are to strive to follow Jesus' example as closely as possible, this passage tells us that we are allowed to become angry, just as long as we control that anger, and not let it control us.

So, you may ask, how am I to release my anger without letting it control me? The answer to that question is not an easy one, because I feel it is different for every person. Whenever I get mad, and I can feel my anger beginning to control me, I like to go outside (if I am at home) and play a little basketball. The physical activity allows me to get my anger under control. In a way, you could say I sweat my anger out.

There are many other methods of expressing your anger in a healthy manner. I have heard that some people like driving to calm them down, but I would be reluctant to try this because I just feel driving a car when you are already angry is a bad idea. Other ideas are: 1) Breathe deeply for a while; 2) Slowly repeat a calm word or phrase such as "relax," or "take it easy;" 3) Use imagery to visualize a relaxing experience.

The methods I just mentioned usually work for me, but keep in mind that they may or may not work for you. The point is that you need to have some way to calm yourself down when you become angry. These methods can be used to control your anger when you are at home, school, work, or in the car. So, the next time you feel yourself getting angry, pick up a basketball and just shoot some hoops.

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that fell on two types of ground did not bring forth fruit due to discouragement: Rocky-when trouble and persecution come (and they will) because of the word (doing and standing for right) they quickly fell away because there was no root to their faith. Thorny - worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth (these are always close to us) choke it, making it unfruitful.

Rather than being discouraged, or one who causes discouragement, show encouragement, instead! Read I Thess. 5:9-11. Our admonition is in verse 9 is "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

*"Satan's tactics are of a negative nature, while God's are of a positive nature."*

We all need encouragement to be built up at different times in our life. As Christians, our purpose in life is to be pleasing

to God. This in and of itself is encouragement.

3. DESPAIR - utter loss of hope, a cause of hopelessness. "I don't see a way things are ever going to improve. The harder I try the more I seem to fail. Is there really something to hope for?" In today's society, suicide is rising as one of the leading causes of death; especially to our young. They see nothing but despair and they feel ending life is easier than facing it. Judas Iscariot, taking his own life, is an example of despair and utter hopelessness taking over--even after he tried to give the thirty pieces of silver back. Paul, in II Cor. 4:8-9 makes these statements: "We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed."

Hope is the key to conquering despair. I Peter 1:3, "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a LIVING HOPE through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." Don't ever lose sight of this. Satan will do anything he can to divert you from serving God and remaining true to his teaching. Life can throw some real bummers our way and Satan will take advantage of these to try and distract us from God, or we tend to blame

God for them. Satan's tactics are of a negative nature, while God's are of a positive nature. God uses faith, encouragement, and hope to direct and uphold you. WE SERVE A LIVING GOD! Don't ever forget that.

How we handle doubt, discouragement, and despair is up to us. And each of us has to deal with these whatever our age or our place in life. The older I get, the more I think Satan uses these three things to get us off course. The final result depends on how we face life and what we do with it. Whether we let Satan get us down or God lift us up. Just remember I John 4:4, "You dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is GREATER than the one who is in the world!"



*Elder of Lawrence Church of Christ*

## ***Thank You***

The church at Ozark would like to thank all of the brethren who have aided in the support of this publication up to this point. Several of you have offered aid or asked how you may be of assistance. Inquiries of this nature are best written to the Editor at the address listed on the back or e-mailed at [jmmm@cwix.com](mailto:jmmm@cwix.com).

Currently, every effort is made to issue Faith Of Our Youth three times each year. We would like to increase this to four times a year. The best means of achieving this goal is to encourage all of our young Christians to express their faith in writing. All members of Christ's body, both young and old, gain strength in witness our youth boldly standing up for the paths of truth.

The only requirement for submissions is that they be based on the Bible. Outside of this, subject matter and length are solely dependent on the author. But we, as fellow members with our youth, must lovingly encourage our youth to produce these articles.

Generations of Christians have faithfully expounded the Word of God utilizing the talents placed within themselves by the Creator. The goal of this publication is to nurture and foster such talents through the written word.

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