

“BUILDING GODLY CHARACTER”

PART 6

OBJECTIVE: *STUDY THE WORD OF GOD CONCERNING CHARACTER BUILDING AS A CHILD OF GOD. CONSIDER THE ELEMENTS OF OUR LIFE WHICH EITHER MAKE US MORE LIKE GOD IN LIFESTYLES OR FAR FROM GOD THROUGH OUR LIFE PATTERNS.*

KEY SCRIPTURES:

JAMES 5:13-18

HEBREWS 1:1-2

2 PETER 1:2-11

JOHN 15:1-5

HEBREWS 11:1-6

MATTHEW 6:33

THE NEXT TENET OR PRINCIPLE WE WILL LOOK AT IN THIS PART IS COMMUNICATING WITH GOD. (MY PRAYER LIFE)

COMMUNICATE WITH GOD

*THIS WOULD NORMALLY BE CALLED A "PRAYER" SECTION, BUT COMMUNICATION CONNOTES A DEEPER, MORE MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP. IN **HEBREWS 1:1-2**, THE WRITER TELLS ABOUT JESUS: "GOD, WHO AT SUNDRY TIMES AND IN DIVERS MANNERS SPAKE IN TIME PAST UNTO THE FATHERS BY THE PROPHETS, HATH IN THESE LAST DAYS SPOKEN UNTO US BY HIS SON, WHOM HE HATH APPOINTED HEIR OF ALL THINGS, BY WHOM ALSO HE MADE THE WORLDS."*

THE ONE WHO BECAME JESUS CHRIST SPOKE TO MOSES AND OTHERS BY VOICE. MOSES PLEADED WITH HIM TO EXONERATE THE OBSTINATE ISRAELITES, AND HE ACQUIESCED TO MOSES' IMPASSIONED PLEA (EXODUS 32). ABRAHAM "BARGAINED" WITH GOD OVER THE FATE

OF THE PEOPLE OF SODOM, FINALLY GETTING HIM TO AGREE TO HOLD OFF DESTROYING THE CITY IF TEN RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE COULD BE FOUND THERE (GENESIS 18). THESE TWO MEN TALKED DIRECTLY TO THE MEMBER OF THE GODHEAD WHO LATER BECAME JESUS CHRIST, AND GOT A RESPONSE RIGHT ON THE SPOT. BUT WE DO NOT HAVE THE LUXURY OF PERSONAL COMMUNICATION AS THEY DID, DO WE?

YES, WE DO!

WHEN WE PRAY, WE CAN TAKE THE BIBLE WITH US AND QUOTE FROM THE BIBLE ABOUT GOD'S PROMISES TO US, WHAT ABOUT THOSE WHO ARE SICK? THEY CAN GO TO JAMES AND QUOTE DIRECTLY TO GOD THE PROMISES IN THAT BOOK (SEE **JAMES 5:13-18**). THEIR PRAYER OF FAITH CAN REACH GOD WITH INTENSITY, BECAUSE THEY ARE PLEADING WITH GOD JUST AS MOSES AND ABRAHAM DID ON BEHALF OF THEIR PEOPLE. WHEN WE QUOTE GOD'S WORD IN OUR REQUESTS TO HIM, HE WILL LISTEN, AND HE WILL SEE THAT WE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT OUR REQUESTS.

ANOTHER EXAMPLE IS ,FOUND IN **MATTHEW 6:33**. WE ARE TOLD TO SEEK GOD FIRST AND HE WILL CARE FOR US. IF IN FACT WE ARE TRULY SEEKING GOD AND STRIVING FOR A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM, WE CAN QUOTE THIS PASSAGE TO HIM. WE ARE, IN ESSENCE, COMMUNICATING WITH GOD JUST AS EFFECTIVELY AS MOSES AND ABRAHAM DID IN THEIR TIME. THIS IS DEMONSTRATED FURTHER IN **HEBREWS 4:12-13, 16**:
"FOR THE WORD OF GOD IS QUICK, AND POWERFUL, AND SHARPER THAN ANY TWOEDGED SWORD, PIERCING EVEN TO THE DIVIDING ASUNDER OF SOUL AND SPIRIT, AND OF THE JOINTS AND MARROW, AND IS A DISCERNER OF THE

THOUGHTS AND INTENTS OF THE HEART. NEITHER IS THERE ANY CREATURE THAT IS NOT MANIFEST IN HIS SIGHT: BUT ALL THINGS ARE NAKED AND OPENED UNTO THE EYES OF HIM WITH WHOM WE HAVE TO DO....LET US THEREFORE COME BOLDLY UNTO THE THRONE OF GRACE, THAT WE MAY OBTAIN MERCY, AND FIND GRACE TO HELP IN TIME OF NEED." GOD WANTS US TO GO TO HIM AND CONFIDENTLY PROCLAIM OUR PLEA TO HIM, JUST AS MOSES AND ABRAHAM DID WHEN THEY IMploRED GOD ON BEHALF OF THEIR CONSTITUENTS.

THERE IS ANOTHER REASON TO COMMUNICATE CLEARLY WITH GOD. THE THOUGHT COMES TO US THROUGH **LUKE 22:36**: "WATCH YE THEREFORE, AND PRAY ALWAYS, THAT YE MAY BE ABLE TO ESCAPE ALL THESE THINGS THAT SHALL COME TO PASS, AND TO STAND BEFORE THE SON OF MAN." WHEN BELIEVERS HAVE A COMMUNICATIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD, THEY MAY QUALIFY TO ESCAPE-THE TROUBLES COMING UPON THE WORLD IN THE TIME OF DESTRUCTION. (**2 CHRONICLES 7:14**)

IT MAY SEEM SELF-SERVING, BUT IF WE GO TO GOD AND DEVELOP GENUINE CLOSENESS WITH HIM, THERE WILL BE MANIFOLD BLESSINGS AS A RESULT. OUR BEST BET IS TO TAKE JESUS AT HIS WORD, AND WE MAY VERY WELL ESCAPE TRAGEDY! MORE IMPORTANT, WE WILL BE ABLE TO STAND BEFORE JESUS WHEN HE RETURNS.

JESUS SAYS THAT HIS SHEEP HEAR HIS VOICE (**JOHN 10:27**). HOW? BY CLOSE CONTACT, PRAYER, MEDITATION, PRAISE, THANKSGIVING, AND BIBLICALLY ORIENTED COMMUNICATION. DANIEL PRAYED THREE TIMES A DAY AND HE WAS SAVED FROM THE LION'S DEN.

SHADRACH AND HIS FRIENDS WERE SAVED FROM A FIERY FURNACE. COMMUNICATION WITH GOD IS NECESSARY AND MAY SAVE OUR LIVES IN CERTAIN LIFE-THREATENING SITUATIONS.

WE HAVE ALL THE REASONS IN THE WORLD TO COMMUNICATE WITH GOD. WE WILL GROW STRONGER SPIRITUALLY. AND WHEN THE EVIL DAY COMES, WE WILL BE ABLE TO STAND!

IN JESUS NAME!