



# the clear word

a publication to encourage a clearer understanding of God's word.

OCTOBER 2009

## The Bright Side of Life Part 2 - By Keri Jones

*Editor's Note: Last month we featured Part 1 in this series entitled "The Bright Side of Life." The following article continues with the principles that will help us succeed in life.*

### Lighten Up!

Today many seminars are given which attempt to get people to laugh and relieve their stress. Psychologists now believe that laughter is therapeutic in removing stress. Perhaps this is why many of us enjoy the comedian or the joke book. They tend to depict true issues in life yet at the same time help us see the funny side of things. Life, however, is not a Hollywood film and there is no opportunity for any retakes. Tragically, so many of us tend to take life far too seriously and miss out on its enjoyment. An old proverb says, "A joyful heart is good medicine" (Prov. 17:22, NAS). Life is a challenge but can be faced and enjoyed if we learn to laugh at ourselves at times.

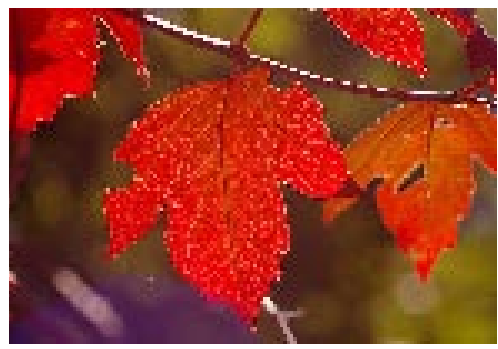
Don't take yourselves so seriously. Find time to laugh. It was once said, "We never stop laughing because we are old but we grow old because we stop laughing." Keep yourself young and enjoy more of life by learning the art of laughing. There is an appropriate time and an

appropriate circumstance where laughter is good. The old adage is so true. "Laugh and the world laughs with you. Complain and you live alone."

### Think Correctly

The Bible says, "For as a man thinks within himself, so he is" (Prov. 23:7, NAS). How we think often determines our actions. I once read a comical phrase which said, "The brain is as strong as its weakest think." Funny, yet true. Tragically, many people are invalidated out of the joy of living due to their negative thinking. Understand, we cannot escape the consequences of our thoughts. What we think will have a great impact on our lives in the present and for the future. We need to know that we all rise or fall, go forward or backward, succeed or fail, according to what we think. That is why we need to think good things about ourselves and others.

It is thinking that produces two master emotions: faith or fear. I once heard an old preacher say, "Faith and fear are both active forms of thinking." This statement at first puzzled me. Over the years, however, I have found the statement has proven to be true. Faith is thinking and



believing in God and His power. This is thinking and believing the right thing in the right way. Fear, however, is the reverse. It is believing and thinking in the wrong thing in the wrong way. There is a thinking that produces faith and a thinking that produces fear.

### Fear is a Killer

A long time ago, a young lady came forward at the end of an evangelistic meeting and said to me, "My fear is destroying me." I said, "What are you afraid of?" She replied, "I don't know. I'm just afraid." This young lady represented thousands of other people in the world who are just as fearful. Some know why they are frightened. Others do not. Most are afraid of some things they do not understand whilst others still fear things they understand. Fear will always be present when we are not putting our faith in God. There is one way we

### this issue

- P1 • The Bright Side of Life Part 2
- P2 • The Bright Side of Life Part 2
- P3 • God Meant it for Good
- P4 • Voices of Change



[newlifechurchptbo.ca](http://newlifechurchptbo.ca)

continued from page 1

can conquer fear and that is to practice correct thinking. Jesus put it in simple terms when He said, "Don't be afraid; just believe" (Mk. 5:36, NIV). Learn to practice the faith attitude through correct thinking. Fear will certainly produce failure but faith produces success.

I realize that at times this is not always easy to do. However, Jesus said, "Everything is possible for him who believes" (Mk. 9:23, NIV). To believe correctly always takes effort. Be determined to win. Refuse to believe what is wrong. Think about what God says about you and believe. Think about the promises of God. They are for you. Determine in your heart to believe and think about what is right. This will release faith that will help you win.

The devil knows when we are afraid and seeks to dominate us. What can we do? First, face up to the fear. Name it and

face it with the powerful name of Jesus. Set your heart and mind to be on the side of God and say, "I will not be afraid. God is on my side. Greater is He who is in me than He who is in the world (see 1 Jn. 4:4). Therefore, He will help me." Fear leaves every time. Emerson once said, "Fear always springs from ignorance." The Bible agrees but also adds that God does not want us to be ignorant concerning the enemy's strategies. Understand, fear is of the evil one, but faith can overcome the world. Live today in the knowledge and understanding that the love of God removes all fear and His love can see you through.

## Words Are Powerful

The victorious lifestyle of faith can be maintained and helped by the way we speak about ourselves and others. The Bible declares, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Prov. 18:21, NAS). How careful we need to be when speak-

ing! Proceeding from our mouths are the ultimate issues of life. I have learned a very simple truth: Make sure you associate with people who speak positively to you. Associate with people who speak good things about other people, whose words will build you up and not pull you down. Mix with people of faith and you will find that you will increase in your faith. It is as the Bible says, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another" (Prov. 27:17, NIV).

We need to listen to the good words people speak and the heart-warming things they confess about God and His people. As we do so, those words we hear will create in us good images of people and God, allowing us to confess our own healing and success. Give your ear and listen to the words of God concerning yourself. Listen to the people who speak the words that are healthy and upbuilding. And remember, faith comes by hearing the word of God.

---

## God Meant it for Good

By Bill Clark

It had been a restless night. Plagued by the unfair events of his past, the prospect of falling asleep seemed almost impossible. Flashes of what he thought were forgotten memories lurked at every hour of the night. While trying to sleep, he remembered the trauma of being sold into slavery, the false accusations of an unrighteous woman, and probably the worst of all – the months and months of trying to survive in an Egyptian dungeon. As

he lay on his bed, it seemed as if he could still feel the dampness of his darkened



cell and hear the scurry of the hungry rats that paid him an unwelcome visit every night. His arms and legs still bore the marks of his shackles, and as he listened to his memories, he could still make out

the faint moaning of imprisoned men who had lost all hope in what seemed like one of the worst places on earth.

All of this and more may have filled Joseph's mind as he readied himself for a visit from the brothers who had sold him into bondage at the very early age of seventeen. How things had changed! Now he was the prime minister of Egypt – second only to the Pharaoh himself! Now he had the power to decide the fate of his cruel and uncaring brothers who wanted to be rid of the young man they had called "the dreamer." But God had a different plan. Instead of seeking



revenge, Joseph sought reconciliation. Over the years, he had learned about the power of forgiveness and how God in His wisdom fits everything that happens “into a pattern for good” (Rom. 8:28, JBP).

With great courage and compassion, Joseph called his brothers together and said, “Come close to me...I am your brother Joseph, the one you sold into Egypt!” (Gen. 45:4, NIV). But he went further than just seeking a reunion; *he also declared God’s purpose in it all.* With incredible wisdom and depth of insight, Joseph said, “it was not you who sent me here, but God” (Gen. 45:8, NIV). The purpose of his sending: *To save lives!* In the face of severe famine which was to last seven years, God had sent Joseph to the land of Egypt “to preserve a remnant...and to save your lives by a great deliverance” (Gen. 45:6, NIV).

More and more today the conviction that we are here to save lives is breaking in on the people of God. We have witnessed God’s efforts to bring His people to maturity; we have watched Him work to restore His church, but now we must see a people emerge who will live to see others saved from the wasteland of brokenness and spiritual famine. Yes, we are called to

proclaim a message that says, “You can be saved from your sins and your sicknesses, and you can be saved from poverty and brought into prosperity!” The weight of oppression can be lifted and the cloud of fear and anxiety will dissipate! God has chosen us to be bearers of a message that has the power to save lives! Hallelujah!

I will never forget the time many years ago in Belleville when I met a young man for coffee whose confession to me was, “I’ve spent so much time looking at the bottom of a bottle.” His life was one of desperation and despair, but he didn’t know how to be set free. And then one Sunday he came to one of our meetings. It was in this meeting that he realized that there was a way out – a way to life and freedom – but he needed help to know what to do. So he called me up on the Monday morning to ask if I could meet him for coffee. It was near the end of our conversation that he looked at me and simply said, “I’m so lost.” Thankfully, there is a way for the lost to be found! That morning he was ready to receive Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, and as a result, he was saved – saved from himself and all his sins! He was saved to learn how to live for God and for others.

*The Clear Word newsletter is a publication of New Life Church in Peterborough. The focus of this publication is to encourage a clearer understanding of God’s Word and to challenge Christians to press on towards maturity in faith and practice.*



Art by Elizabeth St. Hilaire Nelson



The truth that stands out for me as I read the story of Joseph is how he was able to interpret the events of his life in relationship to God's purpose for him. He clearly saw that despite how terrible things had been, God was able to weave it all into a wonderful *pattern for good* that ultimately led to the saving of many souls from famine. This is why later in his life Joseph could say to his brothers, "You intended to harm me, but *God intended it for good* to accomplish what is now being done, *the saving of many lives*" (Gen. 50:20, NIV, italics added). This is a staggering revelation, for it connects what you and I go through in life with how God uses it all to bring the knowledge of salvation to others. In other words, if God can work in my life to bring about good, He can certainly work in yours, no matter how difficult or hopeless things may seem.

I think this is one of the reasons why Jesus stated right at the onset of His ministry what He intended to do. His purpose in coming was to provide salvation to all mankind, so He said, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour" (Lk. 4:18, 19, NIV). Indeed, God means it all for good! How wonderful it is to know salvation from sin, sickness, poverty, and oppression – and to top it off, to enjoy the favour of the Lord! Now that is something to shout about! Praise God, He has done everything well! And, praise God, we have a part to play in His great plan!

## Voices for Change

The following quotes from various writers have been gathered as sources of inspiration, but most importantly, to encourage change in our lives. We trust you take their message to heart:

**Bill Hybels** - "Strong, growing communities of faith can turn the tide of history...There is nothing like the local church when it's working right. Its beauty is indescribable. Its power is breathtaking. Its potential is unlimited."

**Bryn Jones** - "It is through the hardships, challenges, and conflicts of life that our true measure as men and women becomes manifest. We are experiencing the conflict of this age intentionally. We are on probation, being proved and readied for our place alongside Christ in the age to come."

**Paul Billheimer** - "In order to grow in character it is necessary to understand that nothing that God permits to come to His child, whether 'good' or 'ill,' is accidental or without design. Everything is intended to drive him out of himself into God."

**Joseph to his Brothers** - "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives."

**Mark Twain** - "Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."

**Booker T. Washington** - "Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed."

**Billy Graham** - "All other things may change, but Christ remains unchangeable. In the restless sea of human passions, Christ stands steadfast and calm, ready to welcome all who will turn to Him and accept the blessings of safety and peace. For we are living in an age of grace, in which God promises that whosoever will may come and receive His Son. But this period of grace will not go on indefinitely. We are even now living on borrowed time."



**New Life Church**  
Currently meeting at  
Thomas A Stewart Secondary School  
on Armour Road every Sunday  
10:30 am in the cafeteria

**Contact: 705-931-8835**  
info@newlifechurchptbo.ca  
newlifechurchptbo.ca