

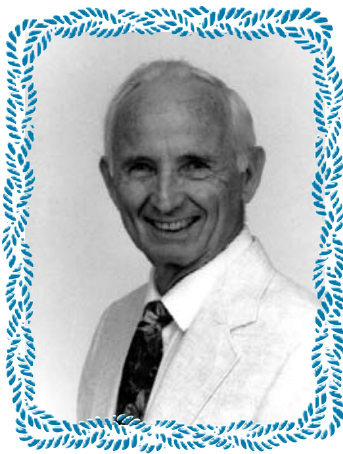
# PRaise

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## OUR BEST TIME TO LEARN

By Merlin Carothers

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Following Jesus' example is sometimes very difficult. The most important part of living a Christian life is to do the best we can to be like Jesus. What an example He set for us! We will never be as obedient to God as He was, but we can try, and keep on trying.

Our human nature is to do things the way *we want* to do them. We are brilliant in finding reasons to approve of our own ways. Even Jesus' disciples thought they were qualified to give Him advice about what He should do.

When we have a conflict with someone - anyone - we tend to push a button that makes us unhappy. If we keep quiet and accept the indignity of being ignored or criticized, we can feel "righteous indignation." We might even feel spiritually stronger than the other person because we let them have "their own selfish way."

God wants us to strive to be more like Jesus. He did not feel abused. Isn't that amazing? Jesus humbled Himself and was totally obedient to God the Father. Even when He was facing death, He had a miraculous peace.

Jesus offers us His peace, but our nature often responds with, "I have a right to be upset!" And that is what God asks us to give up! His message is: *I am leaving you with a gift - peace of mind and*

*heart! And the peace I give isn't fragile like the peace the world gives. So don't be troubled or afraid (John 14:27 TLB).*

Our nature often rebels at the *don't be troubled* directive that He gives us. Here is where His promise in Romans 8:28 can often give us the help we need to believe and act as Jesus did: *We know that all that happens to us is working for our good if we love God and are fitting into His plans. We can learn to: experience God's peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will keep your thoughts and your hearts quiet and at rest as you trust in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7).*

It may seem beyond our understanding to enjoy such quiet hearts and rest, but God created us, and knows what we are like and what He can give to us.

We have a choice: To be upset and unhappy, or learn to: *Always be full of joy in the Lord; I say it again, rejoice!* (Phil. 4:4). Let's say it as frequently as we need to, "My choice is to always be full of joy in the Lord."

When we are disobedient to God, He forgives us because He loves us. He is preparing our eternal home and wants us to keep our attention on Him rather than on the problems in this life. As God permitted Jesus to be delivered into the hands of evil men, He may permit us to have problems with people or with difficult circumstances, but He wants us to learn to trust Him as Jesus did. Now is our best time to learn!



# HOW WILL WE REACT?

By Mary Carothers



Young David had killed the giant, Goliath. No one had believed that he could do it, even King Saul had said, *You are not able . . . you are only a boy* (I Sam. 17:33). And yet, by trusting in God's power,

David had defeated the giant; and with just a small stone!

Saul knew a good thing when he saw it, and kept David with him. He didn't allow him to return home. Rather, David was sent out repeatedly to fight the enemy. He was so successful that Saul promoted David to a high rank, which pleased everyone.

There was just one problem: jealousy. When the men were returning home after being triumphant in battle, all the people of Israel were celebrating. The women came from all the towns with tambourines and began dancing and singing. Nothing wrong with that, it was *what they sang* that became a problem for King Saul. They praised Saul for killing thousands, but praised David for killing *tens of thousands!* This galled Saul. He was very angry and envious of David's popularity.

Now, Saul actually had a choice about how he would react to the praise heaped upon David. He *could* have rejected the natural tendency to be jealous. He could have *chosen* to join in the celebration over Israel's victory.

Saul could have thanked God for providing deliverance through the young man David. He could have resisted the temptation to be angry. But he didn't.

The result? *The very next day an evil spirit from God came upon Saul* (I Sam. 18:10). He had opened himself to the torment of demonic activity by allowing anger and jealousy to take root in his heart.

In Ephesians 4:27 God warns us to *not give the devil a foothold* in our hearts by nursing anger. In saying *do not let the sun go down while you are still angry*, the Lord recognizes our tendency toward anger and jealousy. But God wants us to choose to *reject* those thoughts and feelings. When we realize that our thoughts and attitudes are not pleasing to the Lord, we need to ask Him to help us have the attitudes that He wants us to have. If we truly want to please the Lord, He will help us.

Both Ephesians 4:22 and Colossians 3:9 speak of our need to *put off your old self and put on the new self* - which is Christ. How? By humbly realizing that we, like Paul could say, *nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature* (Rom.7:18). By understanding that *Christ in you* is our only hope. Also

by renewing our hearts and minds with God's Word.

Dear Lord, we don't want to be like Saul. Help us to daily grow more like Jesus as we consciously resist the old ways of thinking and feeling. May the truth and power of Your Word wash our minds and set us free from Satan's lies.

**And yet, by trusting in God's power, David had defeated the giant; and with just a small stone!**



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*Our loss is Heaven's gain. Our prayers are with those who loved them.*



People have sometimes asked us for help in locating an editor for their writings. We recently needed an editor for my newest book, and with the Lord's help, we found one. Her rates are very reasonable, and her quality of work is excellent. If you have need of her services, please let us know.

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Please don't stop sending me your *Praise News*. I love to read it as I'm 84 years old and don't do much visiting. **Lou, FL**

Thanks for all your beautiful *Praise News*. They have blessed me for so many years beyond what I can write. I'm 80 years old and the Lord is still blessing me. **Pat, CA**

I read *Prison to Praise* - this book is awesome. I want to get some more of them. I am 72 years old and I am now praising the Lord for my troubles and trials. I want to be a light to others through our daily lives. **Margaret, AL**

I am 78 years old and read *Prison to Praise* several months ago. I enjoyed it so much. I have now read it three times and each time it just gets better. **Nita, CA**

I read *Prison to Praise* twenty years ago. I'm now 66 years old and have tried to get into the habit of praising Him, even during difficult times. I do okay for a time - then fall back into the old habit. I recently re-read *Power in Praise*, twice, and I can't thank you enough for how God is making me stronger and for the joy He is giving me. **Barb, MT**

A Christian bookstore introduced me to *Prison to Praise* a long time ago. I am 72 years young and I too am one of your fans of the *Praise News*. I find a quiet place to sit and read it and the happy tears just flow. It's awesome the people that you reach. **Mary, CA**

I am 77 years old and suffer from arthritis. When I get *Praise News* I read it again and again as I really enjoy it. I love each of you in Jesus. **Alice, CA**

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Please join us in

wishing a Happy 84th

Birthday to

Merlin this

Month!!!

