



The Bible Banner

February 2018



EXCEPT THE LORD BUILD A HOUSE

A violinist had a brother that was a bricklayer. One day, a woman told the bricklayer brother how wonderful it was to be in the family of a violinist, with a clarification, of course, that not everyone has the same talents, and some even within in the same family seem to have more talent than others.

The bricklayer agreed and replied, "That violinist brother of mine doesn't know a thing about laying bricks. If he couldn't make some money playing that fiddle of his, he couldn't hire a guy with know-how like mine to build a house. If he had to build a house himself, he'd be ruined."

No one would want to hire a chef to build a house, or a tailor to fix a car. When a job needs to be done, people want to hire those who have knowledge in the area they will be working in. And it is no different in the spiritual world. The Bible says, "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it."

This would be true for our body temples, families, and churches. Do you allow God to build your house?

Dream Bars

¼ cup (60 mL) olive oil

¼ cup applesauce OR 2 Tbsp ground flaxseed and water

1 cup (120 g) whole wheat flour ½ cup (90 g) sucanat*

Mix and press into 13x9 (23x33 cm) pan. Bake at 350°F(176.7°C) for 10 min.

Then spread with:

Coconut Topping

1 tsp (5mL) vanilla, optional 1 cup (180 g) sucanat* ½ tsp (2.5mL) salt

6 Tbsp (48 g) flour 1 cup (150 g) slivered almonds

½ cup (120 mL) soymilk 1 cup (100 g) shredded coconut

Mix together, spread over crust and return to oven to bake 25 minutes or more. Cool and cut into bars.



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* *Sucanat - is an abbreviation for **sugar cane natural** that is made from dehydrated sugar cane juice. It is unbleached and contains many of the minerals of the sugar cane. It is available at most health food stores. I use it wherever possible in place of the more refined sugars and it can almost always be exchanged where brown sugar is called for. If it is not available you may use organic or unbleached sugar mixed with a little molasses.*

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"A truly converted man is one whose pen and purse and voice and influence are consecrated to Christ; one whose affections are rich with tenderness and unselfish interest; one who desires to see the light of truth shed abroad, enlightening the whole world." -E. G. White

It was a comfortable home, its log walls, stacked line upon line often gleamed in the afternoon sun. Its four front windows framed a picturesque view across the valley to the often snow-capped mountains beyond. Firmly on the rocks below, its foundation had been painstakingly laid in straight lines block after block. A sturdy table inside provided a place for the house's inhabitants to eat while a warm wood stove and metal roof forced out the cold and provided shelter from the elements. Sometimes happy laughter or singing could be heard through an open window. At night, or in the cold, weary travelers had oft' found comfort in the light shining out through the windows before coming in to find rest in one of its many beds.

But that was before the unthinkable happened... The lady of the house announced that the situation was "becoming intolerable and the house would have to be torn down and destroyed," despite the lack of another place to live. After all, on more than one occasion the owner had found some mice—not one but 2, 3, 4 and counting. Daily, the home was plagued with stinkbugs or even an occasional hornet that must be caught and carefully disposed of. On more than one occasion, the toilet clogged, and at least once its smelly contents overflowed onto the bathroom floor. Though the house was still unfinished, in the corners hung cobwebs guarded by an occasional spider and now the tile flooring was cracking too. After declaring the list of reasons, the lady of the house clinching her

argument said, *"I've been trying to clean this house for years, and yet it never stays clean even for five minutes. The house has got to go."*

Maybe, it was the smile twitching at the corner of my mouth that gave away that I was teasing, but my husband was certainly not convinced of the plan. *"You're crazy,"* he stated, suggesting that perhaps I should consider that the shop had no heat as well as its own supply of mice to be trapped, the roof of the "toy" greenhouse was collapsing from years of too much snow load, and the up and coming igloo in the front yard didn't even have a roof yet.

I knew he was right. I thought back to the text I had read recently for worship—*"Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands."* (Prov. 14:1) A physical woman tearing down her own physical house was so

farfetched that even searching Google I was unable to find one single instance of a woman tearing down her own house in the news. But in the health and the spiritual world unfortunately it is oft repeated. Many tear down their bodies—the house they live in-- daily by unhealthful practices like smoking, drinking alcohol, eating junk food, etc. So there definitely could be a health perspective to considering these words of wisdom. But, what if we dug a little deeper into the spiritual meaning hidden in this verse?

In scripture, a woman is often used to represent a church. (Jer. 6:2; Is. 54:5,6) In this case, a wise woman would then represent the wise members of a church, and a foolish woman would represent the foolish members of the church. The Bible also often uses a house to represent a church. (Heb. 3:6; Gal. 6:10; 1Tim. 3:15). So here we have pictured wise church members who build up God's church, or foolish members who tear down God's church.

What is interesting is that there are at least two main ways that the foolish tear down God's church, the temple of truth, His household of faith. The first and most obvious way is to blatantly wreck it by undermining what it is made out of. This can be accomplished in two ways. Some use the equivalent of a wrecking ball technique and it is obvious to all those around that they are deliberately tearing down the church. Others may be more subtle and almost unnoticed as they remove parts of it piece by piece until one day someone realizes that the foundation has been undermined, there is a breach in the wall, or part of the covering of truth has been removed.

However, the other main way that the foolish tear down the church with their own hands is perhaps even less often noticed. It is a "do nothing" plan. When mice (abominations) creep into the church, or filthiness overflows into it they turn a blind eye and ignore it. After all, they wouldn't want to be too negative -- killing mice and hornets is rather divisive, and cleaning up filthiness is not a fun job. So they continue allowing abominations to creep into the church and soon the natural course of multiplied abominations and filthiness undermines the health and safety of the church.

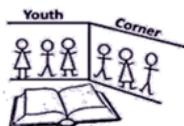
But the wise members will build up God's church. This is the meaning of Paul's statement in 1 Cor. 14:26, *"Let all things be done unto edifying."* In fact, according to Webster's 1828 Dictionary, the English word "edify" comes from the Latin words "oedifico" or "oedes" meaning a house and "facio" meaning to make. So, in a literal sense, the word "edify" means "to build" a house. The wise members of God's church, will strengthen its foundations, never losing confidence in Jesus (1 Cor. 3:11). As they see what God has wrought, they will not forget the way Christ, the chief cornerstone, has led in the forming of His church through the apostles, prophets and other pioneers of the gospel (Eph. 2:20). They will realize the importance of a good foundation for, *"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"* (Psalm 11:3)

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Individually and collectively the wise will seek not only to “*raise up the foundations of many generations*” but also to “*build the old waste places*” and to be a “*repairer of the breach*” (Isaiah 58:12) They will seek to correct leaning walls and pillars by not suffering iniquity to stand within God’s church. (Isaiah 30:12, 13) They will faithfully “*warn the wicked from his wicked way.*” (Ezk. 3:17-19) For they dare not make themselves of the number who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves among themselves because they recognize that the word of God declares that these are not wise. (2 Cor.10:12) Instead they follow the “plumbline” standard of God’s law. (Amos 7:7, Lam. 2:18; Prov. 7:2) Whenever something is found to be so broken down that it cannot be used as building material they always seek to replace it with something better. In the end, it will be found that when storm, tempest and every wind of doctrine is blowing they will have a temple of truth like the wise man who built his house upon the rock. For it is written, “*Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.*” Matt. 7:24 , 25

May God help us all not to be found among the foolish who blatantly or subtly, or by a “do nothing plan” tear down God’s church, but instead may we be found among the wise who build up the household of faith, and the temple of Truth.



Grow Your Roots

“Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.” Proverbs 9:1

When you build a house or any other building, one of the most important parts is the foundation. You must have a good foundation or your house will be a failure from the start. The leaning Tower of Pisa is a famous example of a building that was built with an inadequate foundation on the soft ground on one side of the tower.

There is a parable told of a tree, a strong and stately tree. But its outward appearance was deceptive and the tree knew that inwardly its massive strength was beginning to wane.

When the strong wind blew it had felt itself shaking and heard suspicious creaks. So it decided it must do something before it fell. With much effort it grew several other branches, and then looking stronger and safer than ever, it felt fairly confident. But when the next strong gust of wind blew, there was a terrific snapping of roots and had it not been for the support of a friendly neighbor, the poor tree would have been flat on the ground. When the tree had recovered from the shock, it looked at its neighbor curiously. “Tell me,” it asked, “how is it that you have not only stood your ground, but are even able to help me, too?” “Oh,” replied the neighbor, “that’s easy. When you were busy growing new branches, I was strengthening my roots.”

Like houses that must have a strong foundation and trees that must have strong roots to withstand the storms that come to them, Christian young people must have a strong spiritual foundation or roots. Sink your roots deep into the Rock of Ages. Spend time every morning with God to insure that your roots are strong for the day. Don’t focus your efforts on creating a bunch of branches of vain professions for these will not keep you upright in the storms of life. Will you work on insuring your roots are strong today?



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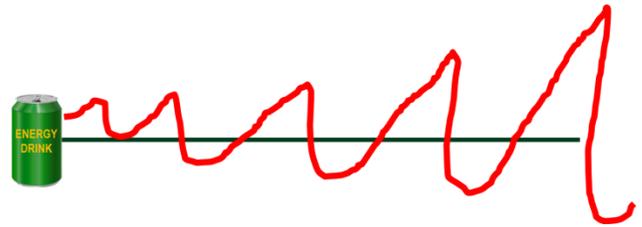
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The Coffee Cup and its Cousins

What over-the-counter grocery ingredient would probably be classed as a prescription drug if it had to apply to the U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for approval today? The answer may be surprising to many, but in 1987, Dr. Gere E. Goyan of the FDA said, "If caffeine were up for approval [before the FDA] today, it probably could only be obtained by prescription." The reason is simple: caffeine is one of a group of drugs related to amphetamines called analeptics. It is a member of the same group of addictive alkaloid chemicals as morphine, nicotine, cocaine and strychnine. According to the American Medical News "Caffeine can produce a clinical dependence syndrome similar to...other psychoactive drugs."¹ In fact, "Anyone who drinks two or more servings of caffeinated beverages per day is at risk for possible withdrawal effects."² These withdrawal effects could include dizziness, headache, visual disturbances, backache, irritability and other problems. So it would be well to consider that "The daily ingestion of even this amount [1 cup] of a potent alkaloid [coffee] is bound to exert some pharmacological action."³ From the John Hopkins Departments of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences comes the report that caffeine produces many behavioral effects similar to those of cocaine and amphetamines. Caffeine increased cocaine-seeking behavior measurably. This infers that caffeine can be a gateway to stronger drugs. Unfortunately, caffeine is the most common drug habit in the United States.⁴ Statistics suggest that more than 80% of Americans consume what the American Psychiatric Association terms "behaviorally active" doses of caffeine.

Consider, "The caffeine in one cup of coffee will make a person feel more alert and physically active, **yet the actual result is more confusion.**"⁵ Many people like to use energy drinks, coffee, tea* and chocolate* because they think that it gives them more energy. But when we ingest caffeinated foods or drinks we are actually stealing future energy because, "The action of coffee and many other popular drinks is similar. ... Its influence is exciting, and just in the degree that elevates above par it will exhaust and bring prostration below par."⁶

Here's how it works. "Tea, [and] coffee... produce an immediate effect. Under the influence of these poisons the nervous system is excited. In some cases, for the time being, the intellect seems to be invigorated and the imagination more vivid. Because this is the result of these stimulants, many conclude that they really need them, and continue the use of those things which produce for the time being such agreeable results. But there is always an after result. There is reaction. The nervous system has been unduly excited to borrow power from the future resources of strength for present use. All this temporary excitement of the system is followed by depression. In proportion as these stimulants temporarily excite the system, will there be a letting down of the power of the organs that have been thus excited, after the stimulus has lost its force."⁷



Even before I was really interested in studying health, I quit using caffeine, including chocolate, while I was pregnant because I determined that it was necessary to having a healthy baby or even a baby at all. "A relatively small amount of caffeine consumed during pregnancy and lactation causes central nervous system impairment in laboratory animals."⁸ Studies show that "Caffeine use may promote abnormal fetal nervous system development."⁹ In fact, "Exposure to caffeine at the time of brain development results in retarded [brain growth] of 90% of [rat] embryos."¹⁰ By the way, it is prudent for all women in their childbearing years to heed this counsel, because human fetal brain development begins at 3-5 weeks of pregnancy, so many women may not even realize that they are pregnant yet at this critical development point. Also consider, "300mg. (3 cups of coffee) per day during the month before pregnancy nearly doubled spontaneous abortion (SAB) risk."¹¹

However, everyone should consider the effects of coffee, colas and other caffeinated products on the organs and systems of their bodies. "Coffee increases production of digestive juices while relaxing the esophageal muscles, thus leading to heartburn and diaphragm pain."¹² This and other factors may lead to nutritional deficiencies. Caffeine also raises blood pressure, slows muscle function, and just 250 mg (2-2 ½ cups of coffee) causes a 30% decrease of blood flow to the brain. Not surprisingly, it also impairs memory. Stress related hormones were considerably higher in people using caffeine as compared to those who ingested a placebo.¹³ One researcher states, "What we found is that caffeine interacts with stress and intensifies it."¹⁴ Caffeine has also been found to cause heart arrhythmias, raise blood cholesterol, and greatly increase the risk of heart attack. "The link between caffeine use and osteoporosis is well established. Even 10 mg of caffeine causes 1 mg. calcium loss in the bones."¹⁵ Also consider that "A child drinking a 12-ounce soda gets the equivalent amount of caffeine intake, on a body weight basis, of an adult who drinks 4 cups of instant coffee."¹⁶



Decaffeinated coffee is not the answer either because it still contains some caffeine and "whether it is decaffeinated or not, just one daily cup of coffee increases the risk of bladder cancer three times...Brown drink users have an increased risk of stomach, kidney, lung, pancreatic, ovarian, and colon cancer..." "This is not surprising since caffeine is "capable of damaging chromosomes."¹⁷ Caffeine is also linked to increased risk of diabetes and low blood sugar and it is certainly of interest that "many in mental institutions with depression and anxiety need no other treatment than to be taken off caffeine"¹⁸

The list of health problems caused by caffeine is really almost endless. I've even heard stories on the news of people who have died of a caffeine overdose. "The lethal dose of caffeine is 10 grams"¹⁹, or about 70 to 100 cups of coffee, but by the time you add up all the sources, modern energy drinks, and the fact that children are smaller, many people are taking 1/10 the lethal dose every day!

However, you needn't panic because, as always, God has something better. There are cereal or herbal coffee replacements that are made from barley or rye as well as from chicory or dandelion. Pero and Roma brands are examples of these. You can even make your own coffee replacement from the roots of the dandelions in your yard! So leave off the caffeine, coffee, colas and their cousins and drink to your health!

***Besides caffeine, both tea and chocolate contain drugs similar in effect to caffeine--theophylline in tea and theobromine in chocolate.**

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LITTLE RUNNER'S HEALTH TIP

Zoe Zebra drinks water when she is thirsty, not soft drinks. Water helps to keep her healthy. Drinking soft drinks is not good for boys and girls either. They should drink water instead like Zoe Zebra, because water helps boys and girls to be healthy too.

Kids' Corner

Written by D. Roberts age 14 Illustrated by D. Roberts age 12

GOD'S AMAZING CREATURES

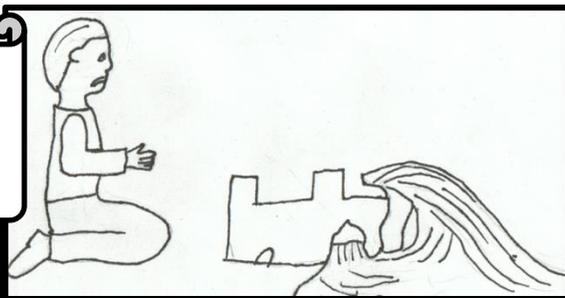
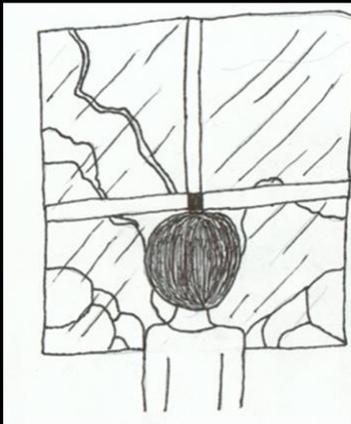


The maned wolf lives in grasslands that have scattered bushes and trees. It lives in Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, and Bolivia. The fur of the maned wolf may be a reddish brown to a golden orange on the sides. The maned wolf has long black legs and a black mane. It also has a white tip on the end of its tail and a white spot under its mouth. Maned wolves are omnivorous, that means they eat both plants and meat. They eat small mammals, rabbits, birds, and fish, but a large portion of their diet is sugarcane, tubers, and fruit, especially the wolf apple. Maned wolves are usually afraid of humans and will run the other direction if they meet people. Aren't you glad that Jesus made the maned wolf?

MEMORY TEXT

"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock." Matthew 7:24

Christian remembered the story that Jesus told about the man who built his house on the rock. When a storm came with lots of wind, he watched the ocean waves splash against the big rocks but the big rocks didn't move. Christian decided he wanted to always obey Jesus so that he would be like the man who built his house on the rock. Christian made Jesus very happy.



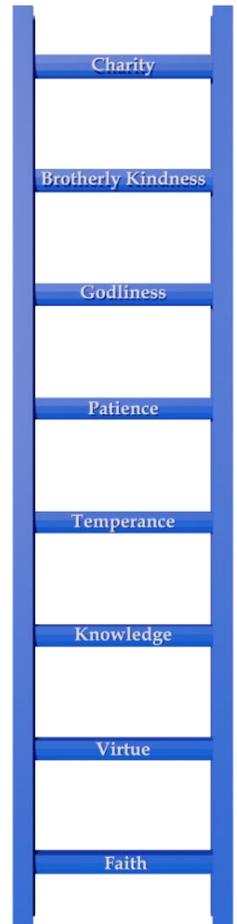
Carnal decided to build a sand castle at the beach. His father told him not to build it too close to the ocean. He reminded him of the story Jesus told of the foolish man who built his house on the sand, and how the flood washed his house away. But Carnal was like the foolish man. He didn't obey. He built his sand castle right next to the ocean and when the tide came in, a big wave washed it all away.

Study to Show Thyself Approved

God's Counsel for Building a Symmetrical Character for Eternity

"Ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building." [1 Cor. 3:9] "This figure represents human character, which is to be wrought upon, point by point. Each day God works with His building, stroke upon stroke, to perfect the structure, that it may become a holy temple for Him. Man is to co-operate with God. Each worker is to become just what God designs him to be, building his life with pure, noble deeds, that in the end his character may be a symmetrical structure, a fair temple, honored by God and man." {8T 173}

1. Why does the Bible say character building is important? _____ 1 Cor. 6:19, 20 "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." 1 Cor. 3:16 "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" (Also 1 Cor. 3:9)
2. What is the Foundation of a good character? _____ Ps. 127:1 "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." 1 Cor. 3:11 "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (Also 1 John 5:5, John 3:16)
3. What result of divine power connected with human effort can serve for strong walls in our character? _____ Isa..26:1 "...salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." Isa. 60:18 "... but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise." Philippians 2:12,13 "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed,...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."
4. What character trait tears down the walls of our characters? _____ Prov. 25:28 "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls." Eccl.7:9 "Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools." Prov. 16:32 "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." (Also Matt. 5:22, Prov. 27:4; Job 5:2, Psalm 37:8)
5. What does the Bible list as the result of holding onto character traits that are "the works of the flesh"? _____ Gal. 5:19-21 "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you ... that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." Prov. 16:18 "Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall." (Also 1 John 3:15, 1 Cor. 3:17)
6. What will those who overcome/ build characters for eternity receive as their reward? _____ Rev. 3:12 "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name." Rev. 21:7 "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." (Also Rev. 2:7,11)
7. Name at least 5 fruits of the Spirit listed in various books in the New Testament. _____ Gal 5:22,23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." Eph. 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Eph. 4:32 "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." 2 Thess. 3:13 "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing." 1 Peter 5:5 "...and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." 1 Cor. 13:13 "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (Also Gal.6:9, Luke 8:15, Job 5:17)
8. Describe the characteristics of the "ladder of sanctification" that are essential for developing a Christ-like character? _____ 2 Peter 1:4-11 "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ...Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."



Answers: 1. Because we are the temple of God 2. Jesus Christ 3. Salvation 4. Anger 5. Destruction, or not inheriting eternal life 6. Heaven and all things 7. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, truth, kindness, well doing, charity, accepting rebuke with humility 8. Faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity.