



The Bible Banner

December 2017



WATER OF LIFE

Water is a basic necessity of life. Without water a person will soon die. And although some people have managed to live as long as 10 days without water, dehydration is a miserable way to end your life. The explorer, Coulthard, who perished of thirst in the Australian desert, left behind, in the place of his last encampment, the feebly scrawled lines: 'Lost, lost, for want of water.' During World War II, thirst (increased by having drunk sea water) caused Nazi forces in North Africa to surrender to the British, revealing the desperate measures men will go to in order that they may satisfy their thirst.

The Water of Life is a necessity for spiritual life. Do you thirst after righteousness?

Borsch/Beet Soup

2 beets, grated
2 carrots, grated
2 onions, chopped fine
4-5 medium potatoes, grated
½ head of cabbage, chopped in short thin strips
About 12 cups/3 quarts (2,850 mL) of water
Seasoning-- chicken-like seasoning, Lawry-like seasoning and salt, to taste

Put the water in the pot first. Then prepare and cook the vegetables until tender. Stir frequently to keep it from sticking to the bottom of the pot. Add seasoning when vegetables are about cooked. (Note: All measurements are approximate. We just use whatever measurements we happen to have on hand.)



PROFITABLE TRADITIONS

Cultivate Heavenly Mindedness in the Early Years—One of the best ways that I have found to include little ones (from newborn up)

in worship time is a worship box. Decorate a shoe box or a similar box and place lots of hands-on items inside. Learn or make up songs to sing for worship that go with each of the items in the box. Let the child pick which item they would like to sing about next, when they are old enough. You may teach about heaven, the protection of angels, health, character, creation, nature and Jesus' love through song. We are counseled *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."*

Col. 3:16 Some of our standard items for a worship box include bells, tick-tock sticks, a little Bible, angel sticks, children of the world finger puppets for "Jesus Loves the Children of the World", flowers, a rainbow, ten commandments, animals, birds and fish, a toy



trumpet or kazoo for "Lift Up the Trumpet" and a "Jesus Loves Me" flag. Many items can be made out of painted cardboard, cloth or whatever you have on hand. My first child loved this kind of worship so much that even before she was a year old I began to notice that when I missed having worship with her she was fussy and cranky all day. She behaved significantly better on days when we had her special worship with the worship box. *"Too much importance cannot be placed on the early training of children. The lessons that the child learns during the first seven years of life have more to do with forming his character than all that it learns in future years."* {Child Guidance pg. 193}

QUOTABLE QUOTES

"I believe that the bulwark of Protestantism against Popery is family worship."

—Charles Spurgeon

Living Fountain or Frozen Cistern?

As I lugged yet another 5 gallon bucket of water, now bucket #175, from the cistern to be placed in 55 gallon barrels waiting inside the house, I began to really think how useful “a living fountain”, where you turn on the faucet and plenty of water is there, could be. In our case, the cistern that collected rainwater from our roof wasn’t broken, just on the verge of freezing to the point of being broken. The temperature had dropped drastically in the last two days, and that morning we had had to thaw the faucet out with a blow dryer despite our improvised efforts to keep the extensive pipe system from freezing the night before. I sighed audibly thinking of the 2,000 gallons of water that we would just have to empty out onto the ground. The cistern had proven itself very helpful during the dry season, but alas, it was really only suitable for summer use. After filling every clean large pot, bowl, pitcher, and container we could find with water and putting it in our house, we finally resigned ourselves to the sad fact that even though our seasonal spring was not yet running, there was no way to store the 2,000 gallons from the cistern inside the house. And we ourselves were going to have to render the cistern “broken” (so that it could hold no water) before it broke from the cold.

My mind thought back to the verse in Jeremiah 2:13, *“For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.”* I, all too well now, recognized the sad fact—a broken cistern, no matter how big it is, is worthless when it is broken and can’t hold water. Like the things of this world, its pleasures are but “for a season” (Heb. 11:25). By contrast, Christ, the living fountain, never fails us. David wrote of His pleasures in Psalm 16:11, *“Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.”*



A few years ago, I took this principle and began to apply it to activities in my life. Did I have lots of “fun” at the time, but when it was all over there was a “let down effect”, indicating that it was really just pleasure for a season. Were my activities a season of jollity, mirth and merriment that in the end turned out to be really just the glitter and tinsel of happiness and not actually the lasting pleasure forevermore that my heart really desired?

Unfortunately, many today seek to satisfy their restless longing with the things of the world. Some seek the praise of men only to find that the season is over, the frost is here and as the Bible prophesied in Matthew 24:12, *“And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.”*

Others hide their true selves behind a mask of fashionable clothes, shoes, makeup and jewelry, hoping against hope that they will be happy if they are just beautiful enough-- not realizing that they are striving for a broken cistern *“for the fashion of this world passeth away”* 1 Cor. 7:31

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A portion of people put their confidence in riches, stocking up treasure on earth only to have thieves break in and steal or things break down from moths, rust and general decay. Too late, they learn that the stock market can crash and even gold bars are worthless when you are hungry—they cannot be eaten. In the end, the truth of Prov.23:5 becomes evident. *“Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for riches certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.”*

There are so many finite things that mankind bases their happiness on or places their confidence in – education, amusements, politics, circumstance, their job or even health. In the end, we all must realize that even those in the best of health only live a mere century today. Psalm 144:4 states, *“Man is like to vanity: his days are as a shadow that passeth away.”*

If we would be truly happy, we must seek a living fountain-- that which will give pleasure evermore. Instead of trusting in riches, we must follow Christ’s words of wisdom. *“... lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:”* Matt. 6:20 Instead of visiting the broken cisterns of this world and placing our confidence in education, amusements, fashions, or job security we may find security in knowing and understanding the love of Jesus. For though *“the world passeth away, and the lust thereof... he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”* 1 John 2:17 Instead of placing our confidence in mankind and militias or politics and presidents we may choose God’s kingdom for *“His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.”* Daniel 7:14 Thank God, we may safely partake of the Water of Life found in His word. *“For the word of our God shall stand for ever.”* (Isaiah 40:8) There is no reason to turn to broken cisterns of this world for Jesus promises, *“I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.”*

Rev. 21:6



FRAGMENTS

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much." Luke 16:10

"Look, there's already 200 gallons of water in the tank," one of my siblings exclaimed. Even my parents were surprised at how fast the tank for our gutter system was filling. We had tried gathering rainwater from occasional rainstorms before, but the raindrops were so spread out that we did not gather much by setting a bucket out in the rain. But this time, before we thought it could be possible, water began flowing out the lid of the tank and my father, with umbrella in hand, went to remove the cap that he had put on the overflow. A gush of water burst forth, and we all grinned with delight as we watched his umbrella bobbing as he tried to put something under the spurt of water to keep it from eating out the yard below, while at the same time trying to avoid the waterfall of water that was pelting him from above.

Because our spring is seasonal and dries up in the summer causing our family to struggle to ration water annually, last year we installed a gutter system on the house. That way every raindrop that falls anywhere on the roof of the house is channeled into a storage tank. The difference in severity of water rationing changed drastically when gathering the little pieces of water (raindrops) together! We used the collected rainwater to water the garden for weeks after our spring stopped running. Thanks to the gutter system, this fall, when the winter rain began but our spring was still not running, we had water for water-bath canning, dish washing, baths and many other needs.

Having a gutter taught us the importance of little things. For many years, all of those little raindrops have fallen onto our roof, but they all went to waste while at the same time we were struggling to ration water. Yet, when all those little drops were collected, they added up quickly to more than 2,000 gallons of water. It is without a doubt, that no one struggling with a water shortage would purposely waste 2,000 gallons, but when those 2,000 gallons come in little raindrops on the roof, many do not recognize the magnitude of what they are wasting. Gathering up the little fragments of water added up to gathering thousands of gallons.



There are other things in life that we waste, thinking that they are just little amounts. Time, money, food, and electricity are just some of the things people waste in little amounts. But what could these littles add up to?

Let's consider time. How many I hear say, "I just don't have enough time to get everything done." But do we let many fragments of time go to waste? If one wastes only one hour a day (remember that 60 minutes make an hour), in a year's time they will have wasted over 2 weeks. If they live to be 80 years old, they will have wasted over 3 full years of their life. However, what if we decided to set up a "gutter system" to gather up the fragments of time?

For an interesting experiment, try setting up "gutter systems" to catch all the fragments you would typically allow to go to waste. How about making a leftover casserole with all the food you would waste? A "gutter system" for time would be finding a profitable activity you can do in any spare moments (such as when you are waiting for people who are tardy). One woman started reading books in the time she was waiting for her husband and managed to read through several history books she never would have had the time to read through otherwise. Knitting, crocheting, or any other useful hand trades that you can carry with you make a great "gutter system" for time. Bible memory cards can help you memorize scripture in your spare time. Even in spare moments when nothing else may be done, prayer can accomplish wonders.

What about a "gutter system" for money? People who started gathering up their pennies have bought entire houses, cars and other expensive things. I heard once of a man who bought a new car with a dump truck full of pennies. Entire missions could be established with the money God's people waste a few cents at time. And the list could continue. I love this quote from a book with financial advice. **"Take care of the pennies, and the dollars will take care of themselves."**

No wonder Jesus said, **"Gather up the fragments ... that nothing be lost."** John 6:12 What are some "gutter systems" you can install today?



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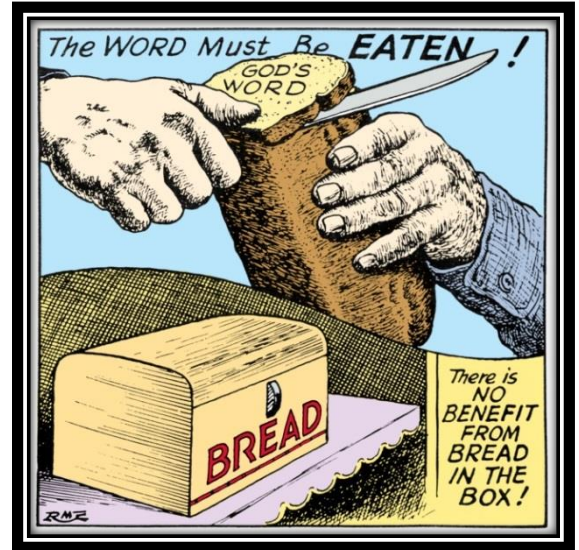
Study to Shew Thyself Approved Biblically Illiterate?

Recently, a friend sent me an article that expounded on how Biblical illiteracy might be playing a part in the low levels of morality in American society. The studies cited were eye-opening for America, a country that professes to be Christian, as in, "One nation under God." The studies showed fewer than half of all adults could name the four gospels. Twelve percent of adults thought that Joan of Arc was Noah's wife. Sixty percent could not even name five of the 10 commandments. Another study stated that 50% of graduating high school seniors that were tested thought that Sodom and Gomorrah were husband and wife.

(For studies see Barna Group's website -- <http://www.barna.org/>)

Test your Biblical Literacy

1. Who was Zaphnath-paaneah? _____
2. Who was Bildad? _____
3. What is the longest chapter in the Bible? _____
4. What is the shortest verse in the Bible? _____
5. Who was Jedidiah? _____
6. Who was Zeresh? _____
7. Who was Jemima? _____
8. What are the Hebrew names of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? _____
9. Who fell out of the window while Paul was preaching? _____
10. Who was Timothy's mother? _____
11. Which verse in the Bible, written by a king, contains all the letters in the alphabet except q? _____
12. What is the name of the country that still exists in Europe, that Paul said he planned to visit? _____
13. Which book of the Old Testament best describes the full gospel in detail? _____
14. Which verse in the New Testament best summarizes the gospel? _____



Hints and Answers: 1. Gen. 41:45 2. Job 2:11 3. Psalm 119 4. John 11:35 5. 2 Samuel 12:24,25 6. Esther 5:10 7. Job 42:12-14 8. Daniel 1:6,7 9. Acts 20:9 10. 2 Timothy 1:5 11. Daniel 4:37 12. Romans 15:24 13. Isaiah 14. John 3:16



EAT THE RAINBOW

Did you know that some studies show that 60% of Americans have eaten something in the last 24 hours that they regret because it was unhealthy? (Asheville Citizen Times, Oct. 7, 2017, Section B) It seems especially during the winter months consumption of unhealthy food goes up while consumption of healthy foods diminishes drastically. Paul gives us

some excellent advice in Romans 12:21 *“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”* According to Strong’s Concordance the word “evil” here could also be translated “worthless, injurious or bad”. In other words a health paraphrase of this verse might say, *“Overcome worthless, injurious or bad food with good food.”*



And that is where “eating the rainbow” comes in. I can still remember the delight that I felt the first time that I got to touch a rainbow that was formed from the water droplets of a waterfall where the sun was shining through.

Even one step better than touching a rainbow is to “eat the rainbow”—eating those foods grown from a combination of water and sunshine and a miracle of God’s creative power.

Before artificial colorings, food that looked pretty and thus appealed to the senses was also generally good for you. It was the colorful fruits and vegetables of the garden and orchard. Today, many studies have shown that a high intake of colorful foods in the form of fruits and vegetables is associated with a substantial reduction in the risk of various cancers, coronary heart disease, and stroke.

A study conducted from Finland even found that a high intake of fruits, vegetables and berries was associated with a 35% lower risk of all causes of mortality. Why? One reason is because vegetables and fruits are rich sources of folic acid, potassium and fiber, and are known to be excellent sources of health-promoting phytochemicals. (“phyto” meaning plant)

Here is a small sampling of what eating a variety of colors could do for you.

Red—Ellagic acid helps to detoxify the body—Found in strawberries and raspberries

Orange—Carotenoids help to stimulate immune responses—In yellow/orange vegetables & fruits

Yellow—Limonoids help eliminate cancer-causing agents—Found in citrus

Green—Natural indoles/isothiocyanates activate enzymes that degrade carcinogens (cancer-causing agents)—Found in broccoli, cabbage and Brussels sprouts

Blue—Phenolic acids are antioxidants—Found in berries and grapes

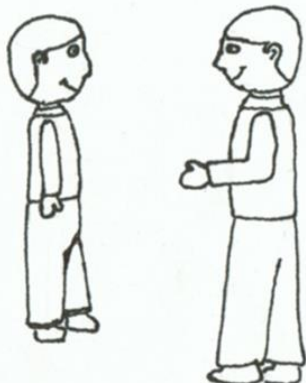
Purple—Flavonoids act as free radical scavengers—Found in most fruits and vegetables

White—Allyl sulfides stimulate beneficial DNA repair—Garlic and Onions

And this sampling doesn’t even include many other health benefits from eating fruits and vegetables like Vitamin A that is found in orange and dark green vegetables, and Vitamin C that is found in many fresh fruits and veggies. In fact, the benefits of eating fruits and vegetables are so great that researchers are now saying to reduce the risk of all major cancers you should consume 8-9 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.



On a three meal a day plan that would mean eating 2-3 servings of fruit or veggies per meal. While on a two meal a day plan that means eating 4-5 servings of fruit or veggies per meal. That’s quite a bit, so concentrating on eating what is good could very well help overcome the habit of eating worthless food. Eating the rainbow might just blossom into a rainbow of good health.



Christian read the story about Jesus and the woman at the well. Christian wanted to be like Jesus. He wanted to tell other children about how Jesus was the Water of Life. Christian told all his playmates about Jesus. He made Jesus very happy.



Carnal didn't want to tell other children about Jesus. He was afraid the children would make fun of him for believing in Jesus. So Carnal didn't tell any of his playmates about Jesus. He made Jesus very sad.

MEMORY TEXT

1 Peter 3:15

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"

GOD'S AMAZING CREATURES

Peck, peck, came a noise from the attic.

"I think that flicker must have gotten into the attic again. It woke me up," my sister said sleepily.

There had been a Northern Flicker around our house recently. It had been eating all the insects that had crawled into the cracks of our house. We thought it might be a flicker, since the year before a flicker had crawled into the attic.

"Oh, no," I said, hoping it didn't peck through something important. The noise continued. *Peck, peck.* My parents were still sleeping, but as soon as they woke up, we went straight in to tell them. "The flicker is in the attic again," I said.

A little while later, my father decided that he had better go get the flicker out of the attic when it again started pecking on the side of the house. He called me to help him. We crawled up into the attic with nets and started moving boxes. The flicker started flying around. I hid behind some boxes. (Not much help, I know.)

My father finally gave up on me and he went first. The flicker flew past him, past me, and through the wall of boxes that my father had built. Finally, after much work, my father caught the flicker and took it outside. It was all tangled up in the net. We untangled it and let it loose. I'm glad Jesus kept the flicker from getting hurt. Aren't you?



LITTLE RUNNER HEALTH TIP



Iggy the Iguana Lizard likes to eat pretty colored berries, pieces of fruit and lettuce. It makes him healthy. Boys and girls who want to be healthy will eat berries, fruits and vegetables too.