

THE GOOD NEWS—NEWS

JANUARY 2021

BUT GOD CAN

“But God Can” is our faith theme for the new year.

You can find this theme in Ephesians chapter two.

Please read it and take it into your heart.

Made Alive in Christ

2 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh^[a] and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.¹⁰ For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Jew and Gentile Reconciled Through Christ

¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)—¹² remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two

groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace,¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

¹⁹ Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household,²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

But God Can make you alive in Christ if you will adhere to His Word. He has to those who already believe, and he will to those who do not yet believe, give us new life by rescuing us from the domain of darkness, in which we have all lived at one time, following the desires of our hearts and were dead in our transgressions and sins. We all followed the ways of the world at one time, and maybe you are still in the worldly way of life. Make the change.

But God Can, because of his great love and his richness of mercy has already made you alive with Christ, by his grace. For it is by that grace, through faith we are saved. Make the change.

Step out of the worldly way of life into the heavenly realm, where it says we are already seated with Christ.

But God Can , cont.

In that heavenly realm with Jesus who has prepared a place for you , you will find IN Him, The Spirit of Truth, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. You will be made whole and new.

The empty place in your heart, that you have been struggling to fill, with all the things of the flesh, will be replaced by Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, filling you with the fullness of life.

Make the change. In him you will become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Make the change, by repenting, confessing, and believing.

Romans 10:8-10,13

"The word is near you ; it is in your mouth and in your heart ,that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. "

For *"whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."*

Will you be the "whoever" who calls upon the name of the Lord today, and receive salvation and new life in the Lord Jesus Christ?

If you will, **He will**, come into your heart and life. That's his promise to you, and he never breaks a promise.

Make the change, exchange your old life for Jesus' life in you, your only hope of glory.

I pray so.

Mitzi

God Lives Under The Bed

My brother Kevin thinks God lives under the bed. At least that's what I heard him say one night before going to bed. He was praying out loud in his dark bedroom, and I stopped outside his closed door to listen.

"Are you there, God?" he said.

"Where are you God? Oh, I see. Under the bed."

I giggled softly and tiptoed off to my own room. Kevin's unique perspectives are often a source of amusement. But that night something else lingered long after the humor. I realized for the first time the very different world Kevin lives in. He was born 30 years ago, mentally disabled as a result of difficulties during labor. Apart from his size (he's 6-foot-2), there are few ways in which he is an adult. He reasons and communicates with the capabilities of a 7-year-old, and he always will.

He will probably always believe that God lives under the bed and that airplanes stay up in the sky because angels carry them. I remember wondering if Kevin realizes he ever dissatisfied with his monotonous life?

Up before dawn each day, off to work at a workshop for the disabled, home to walk our Cocker Spaniel Harriet, return to eat his favorite macaroni-and-cheese for dinner, and later to bed. The only variation in the entire scheme are laundry, when he hovers excitedly over the washing machine like a mother

with her newborn child. He does not seem dissatisfied.

He lopes out to the bus every morning at 7:05, eager for a day of simple work. He wrings his hands excitedly while the water boils on the stove before dinner, and he stays up late twice a week to gather our dirty laundry for his next day's laundry chores.

I remember wondering if Kevin realizes he is different. And Saturdays-oh, the bliss of Saturdays! That's the day my Dad takes Kevin to the airport to have a soft drink, watch the planes land, and speculate loudly on the destination of each passenger inside. "That one's goin' to Chi-car-go!" Kevin shouts as he claps his hands. His anticipation is so great he can hardly sleep on Friday nights. And so goes his world of daily rituals and weekend field trips. He doesn't know what it means to be discontent. His life is simple. He will never know the entanglements of wealth or power, and he does not care what brand of clothing he wears or what kind of food he eats.

His needs have always been met, and he never worries that one day they may not be. His hands are diligent. Kevin is never so happy as when he is working. When he unloads the dishwasher or vacuums the carpet, his heart is completely in it. He does not shrink from a job when it is begun, and he does not leave a job until it is finished. But when his tasks are done, Kevin knows how to relax. He is not obsessed with his work or the work of others. His heHe still believes everyone tells the truth, promises must be kept, and when you are wrong, you apologize instead of argue. Free from pride and unconcerned with appearances, Kevin is not afraid to cry when he is hurt, angry or sorry. He is always transparent, always sincere. And he trusts God.

Not confined by intellectual reasoning, when he comes to religion, he comes as a child. Kevin seems to know God - to really be friends with Him in a way that is difficult for an "educated" person to grasp. God seems like his closest companion. In my moments of doubt and frustrations, I envy the security Kevin has in his simple faith. It is then that I am most willing to admit that he has some divine knowledge that rises above my mortal questions. It is then I realize that perhaps he is not the one with the handicap - I am. My obligations, my fear, my pride, my circumstances- they all become disabilities when I do not trust them to God's care. Who knows if Kevin comprehends things I can never learn?

After all, he has spent his whole life in that kind of innocence, praying after dark and soaking up the goodness and love of God. And one day, when the mysteries of heaven are opened, and we are all amazed at how close God really is to our hearts, I'll realize that God heard the simple prayers of a boy who believed that God lives under the bed.

Kevin won't be surprised at all !

First

Well it's good to be able to share with you on the first month of this new year! My prayer is that we all have a better year than 2020!

My hope for you as well as myself is that we would put Jesus (first) in this new year of 2021. That we would make it a point to read His word, but also study His word. Get to know Jesus! Get to know His character the fruits of His Spirit these are found in Galatians 5:22-23 which says "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

You notice the first characteristic of Jesus' character is LOVE! We don't have the ability to really love the way Jesus wants us to unless we know Him personally. In John 13:34 Jesus shares with us how He wants us to love and it is with a command. He says "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have love you, so you must love one another."

Why! Because, "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." How do we really love others as Jesus Loves us? One thing is let God be in control of our lives. When we don't let God control our lives, we are really out of control. Jesus shares a verse with us in Matthew 16:24-25. "If anyone would come after Me, he must (deny) himself and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for Me will find it."

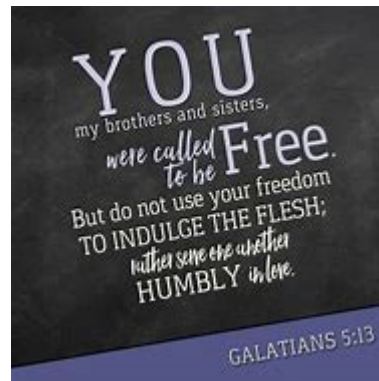
It's a command to deny our flesh (deny) what we want and put God and others first! This is something that is not normal. It can only be done through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives! I love what Paul tells us in Roman's 12:1 "Therefore I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God --- this is your spiritual act of worship." This is a daily act of our will! It's a God thing that requires denial of self!

The bible tells us without Jesus we have no Spiritual life in us. 1 John 5:11-12 John gave testimony about this. John says "And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life."

If you have never trusted in Jesus to save you, my prayer is that you will ask Him to come in to your heart and put Him (FIRST) In your life!

In the love of Jesus!

Fred



Choices

- I CHOOSE to TRUST in God and leave it in His hands
- I CHOOSE to LOVE my neighbor and treat them with respect
- I CHOOSE to RESPOND like Jesus when anger starts to rise
- I CHOOSE to FORGIVE others because Christ first forgave me
- I CHOOSE to Live in God's peace when I give Him my concerns
- I CHOOSE to BE LED by God's Spirit and walk in His power each day
- I CHOOSE to BECOME more like Jesus and walk in His victory
- I CHOOSE to OFFER praise to God when my soul is overwhelmed
- I CHOOSE to SET my mind on Christ, not on worldly distractions
- I CHOOSE to BE OBEDIENT to God even when I don't understand
- BECAUSE...
- I CHOOSE to LIVE a surrendered life to the one who does understand.

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GOD PROVIDES

Have you ever had an experience where God provided something in such a way that it was clear that God, himself, was making His presence known? My husband had such an experience over 40 years ago and yet the miracle of it seems as fresh as if it happened yesterday.

Years ago when I was about in my late 20's, I received word that my Father had died. I was about seven months along in expecting our second child. The Doctor had given me the ok to take the 400 mile trip to where my parents lived. My husband worked nights and so he decided he would go on to work so he could get permission to be off a couple days and we would start our trip when he gets home.

The next morning about 2:00 a.m. when my husband was driving home on a lonely country road, He realized that his truck was getting very hot. He stopped and checked and realized that the radiator was very hot and dry and he needed to get some water. My husband didn't have any water with him so he had to decide what to do.

There were no other people driving on the road at that hour so he had to find a way to get water or start walking.

As he was standing outside his truck he heard a sound from the field along the road. It was the sound of running water. He took his empty lunchbox and went into the field. It was very dark and all my husband had to go on was the sound of running water getting closer as he walked in the field. It had rained that day and the water was in a little spring. After several trips filling up his lunch box with water, he had his radiator full of water and he continued home.

My husband and I love to remind ourselves of that experience especially when we have needs and we don't know how they are going to be met. Our Heavenly Father provided for us.

Our Heavenly Father will provide for you too. Nothing is too big or too small for Him.

Sally



Time To Laugh

An elderly woman walked into the local country church. The friendly usher greeted her at the door and helped her up the flight of steps. "Where would you like to sit?" he asked politely.

"The front row please." she answered.

"You really don't want to do that", the usher said, "The pastor is really boring."

"Do you happen to know who I am?" the woman inquired.

"No." he said.

"I'm the pastor's mother," she replied indignantly.

"Do you know who I am?" he asked.

"No." she said.

"Good," he answered.

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