

CALVARY YOUTH FELLOWSHIP

CALVARY YOUTH VOICES



PSALM 9:9

The Lord also will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble.



**table
of
contents**

**IN
THIS
ISSUE**

- 03** **EDITOR'S LETTER**
- 06** **NEWSFLASH! BY JULIA**
- 08** **THE HOPE OF
ASSURANCE**
- 11** **JAMES SERMON
REVIEW BY RYAN**
- 13** **HAS GOD WITHHELD
GOOD FROM ME?**

EDITOR'S LETTER

Dear Readers,

It is a blessing to be able to write to you again! Thank God for allowing the YF to slowly transition into physical meetings permanently, and I am sure that we have all been anticipating coming back to church.

If you notice, there has been a new segment added to CYV! This new segment is entitled 'Newsflash!' where YFers write about recent events that happened over the YF year. This issue, we have Julia writing about YF Get-Together in January. Hopefully, this can be a new segment where more YFers are able to contribute!

Speaking of contributions, our current YF year is drawing to a close, signifying a new year where the YF portfolios are reopened and YFers can sign up to serve in different areas of YF. This ties in with our meditation for this issue, taken from 2 Chronicles 31:20-21 --

20 And thus did Hezekiah throughout all Judah, and wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God.

21 And in every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, he did it with all his heart, and prospered.

2 Chronicles speaks about the rule of kings over Israel and Judah, starting with Solomon. It tells of the split of the two nations under Solomon's son, Rehoboam's, rule. The kings following then varied in character -- some initially good then turned bad, some completely evil and some that continued to stay faithful to the Lord. One of the good kings was Hezekiah.

EDITOR'S LETTER

Unlike some of his predecessors, Hezekiah was a faithful servant of God. He brought into effect political reform -- such as a mandate for the sole worship of Yahweh and prohibiting the veneration of other deities in the Temple of Jerusalem.



YAHWEH

a name of God, revealed to Moses

Verse 20 illustrates the reason for Hezekiah's work -- he "wrought that which was good and right and truth before the Lord his God". He took God's standard as the only standard that he would hold the kingdom of Judah to. "Wrought" means to exert strength. Hezekiah strived with all his might to do what was pleasing in the eyes of the Lord. He knew that it was his purpose to guide the people on the right path, after years of rule of evil kings. Hezekiah only sought what was according to God and God only.

This sentiment is reiterated in verse 21, which highlights the attitude Hezekiah had for his work. Hezekiah knew to "seek his God" and "did it with all his heart". Once again, Hezekiah sought the Lord wholly. He did so in all aspects of his life; whether in "service of the house of God", in "the law" and "in the commandments". Hezekiah had a sincere heart that desired to seek what was pleasing unto the Lord. Thus, Hezekiah was

rewarded; "prospered" in all that he did in the service of the house of God and in his governance

of Judah. Hezekiah was even praised for doing "that which was right in the sight of the Lord" (2 Chronicles 29:2).



EDITOR'S LETTER

Hezekiah is an example that we should follow. Seeking God in all aspects of life, whatever your vocation, should not only be your goal, but your motivation. Hezekiah's reason for his faithfulness was his desire to be Christ-like. Our attitude should be one that is sincere and whole; focused only on what is desirable in His eyes.

Ultimately, as we enter the new YF year and even seek for areas for service, may we not forget that our reason for service is to please Him and Him alone. May we be like Hezekiah, a man that sought God with all his heart. Even outside of service, in school, work and even NS, may we not forget to seek Him, the One who has blessed us with so much.

In Christ,
The Editor

*And it shall come to pass,
if ye shall **hearken diligently** unto
MY COMMANDMENTS,
which I **command** you this day, to
LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM
with all your **heart** and with all your **soul,**
Deuteronomy 11:13.*

NEWSFLASH!

YF Get-Together (Jan) - Julia

In January, we had YF Get-Together, held at different YFers' houses. We had a blessed time of fellowship -- games, singspiration and sharing by YF leaders. In this issue, we invited Julia to share about her group, Peace's, experience during Get-Together!



Thank God that our group could meet in person for YF Get-Together on 30th January! It was an eventful one for the Group of Peace with a time of singspiration, sharing, dinner, and games.

Noah and Grace & Joyce kindly opened their homes to host our group; with five of us in one home and six in the other. We spent the afternoon playing board games before heading out to dinner. Despite some setbacks to our schedule (one group got lost, the other had to speed-walk/run home, with both groups bringing back boxes of food), we made it back to join the other YF groups over Zoom for a time of singspiration. It was really a joy to be able to sing out loud together!

For private circulation only

NEWSFLASH!

After this, we resumed eating our dinner, and then had a sharing by one of our group leaders on 1 Thessalonians 1. Here, Paul prayed for the Thessalonians and commended them for their faith, hope and love. Their faith, hope and love were seen in how they were examples to all that believed in Macedonia and Achaia, and their faith had spread throughout the region (v7-8).

They also turned to God from idols to serve the true and living God, and waited for His Son from heaven to return (v9-10). Ultimately, the Thessalonians' faith, hope and love were evidence that they were chosen by God and part of His elect. Thus, we were challenged to reflect on whether we similarly have faith, hope and love as evidence for our salvation, particularly reflecting on who or what we have faith in and hope for, and whether our love for God is evident in our lives.

We then finished the night off with a "How well do you know your group members?" Kahoot (with baby pics included!) and soon after headed home to rest up after a tiring but enjoyable day.

Overall, it was a great time of fellowship and bonding, one that was precious given that the COVID situation has had us shift our YF meetings online for the past nine months. It was also yet another good opportunity to reflect on our spiritual walk with God. Thank God that we stayed safe and healthy as well!

THE HOPE OF ASSURANCE

By Geoffrey Thomas - Ligonier Ministries

For many years, I had two excellent Christian women in my congregation who had very different experiences regarding their assurance. One had the strongest assurance of faith that I have known. She could never sing some hymns of William Cowper and could not understand how others could sing them. Lyrics such as “Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord?” were quite alien to her own heart’s conviction. On the other hand, Frances Crosby’s “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine” she could sing from her heart. She worked with the young people, wrote weekly letters to her children when they went to college, never missed a prayer meeting, took her place humbly when the means of grace were dispensed, and never overwhelmed others with her personal convictions of her safety in Jesus. In her seventies, she contracted cancer, and when she drank that cup that God had given her, she said, “Nevertheless, not my will but thine be done.” She died with the same peace and anticipation that she had shown all her life.

The other woman had little assurance. Those sermons I preached that were aimed at awakening and warning the careless she took as delivered to her personally. She expressed to her husband her feeling that she was not a true Christian.

Lyrics such as “Where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord?” were quite alien to her own heart’s conviction. On the other hand, Frances Crosby’s “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine” she could sing from her heart.

He asked me to tone down or balance my preaching. So it was for many years, but more recently she has experienced more hope in the Lord, that He is her Savior, and one day she will be with Him.

In the more than forty years that I have known her, she has labored for the Lord and His people. She is exceedingly zealous in the things of God. She is full of good works. There is not a person in the church who falls sick who does not get a card from her with suitable sentiments and verses.

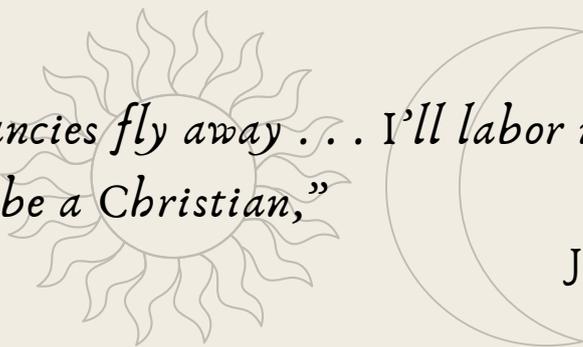
THE HOPE OF ASSURANCE

By Geoffrey Thomas - Ligonier Ministries

She makes cake and food for needy people. She never hurries away from church meetings. She is exceedingly supportive of me as her pastor. It has been a blessing to be prayed for and encouraged by her for so long. And yet, for decades, she lacked the joys of full of assurance of faith.

Two women, so very different in the degree of assurance that they have possessed. And yet, the one who lacked that assurance excelled almost everyone else in the congregation in her work of faith, labors of love, and patient hope in Jesus Christ. What does that tell us? We must be very careful of using our lack of assurance as the excuse to slack in the speaking and praying and working in the church for our Savior.'

How can God expect me to be active for Him when there are periods when I do not feel that I have Him?' we sometimes ask. The second woman has learned the great lesson that her feelings are not to be the touchstone of her duties. She works zealously for God because that is God's will for her and for every Christian. "Let fancies fly away . . . I'll labor night and day to be a Christian," John Bunyan wrote. That is essential in the Christian life. There is never an excuse for becoming lukewarm, especially in pleading a lack of assurance. That is unbelief. We are to strive always to do the will of God our Creator and Judge. If you have some trembling hope, then do it for Him who gave His life for you. Love so amazing, so divine, demands your soul, your life, your all. In obeying God, assurance revives and faith is strengthened.



"Let fancies fly away . . . I'll labor night and day to be a Christian,"

John Bunyan

THE HOPE OF ASSURANCE

By Geoffrey Thomas - Ligonier Ministries

Again, we learn that though the absence of full assurance must not and may not prevent us from living the Christlike life we should be living, this lack is a deficiency when troubles and doubts overcome our duty to be rejoicing in the Lord always. **How can we rejoice when we are not sure if we have Him as our Savior?** Then we must confront our feelings with the foundational truths of grace. Our feelings, our attainments, and our understanding are not the reasons why we enter the place of bliss. Instead, it is only because of the life and achievements of another, namely, our Lord Jesus Christ. He makes us acceptable. The best that Christians have done, even in the person you most admire who is full of faith and peace, is all imperfect and needs to be washed and cleansed in the atonement of Golgotha.¹ That is the only way. We look to Him and we say, "Whatever my spiritual state, my only hope is in the Redeemer."



"We look to Him and we say, "Whatever my spiritual state, my only hope is in the Redeemer."

¹ The common name of the spot where Jesus was crucified. It is interpreted also as "the place of a skull" (Matt. 27:33, Mark 15:22, John 19:17)

JAMES SERMON REVIEW

By Ryan

For the first two months of the year, Pastor Frank has been leading us through a series on the book of James. Throughout January, we studied chapter 1, understanding the purpose of testing, looking at how we are to face trials by looking to God for wisdom, and a calling for us to be doers of the word and not hearers only. On 6 February, we started chapter 2, covering the first half from verses 1 to 13.

In verses 1-3, James gives a scenario of partiality. If someone were to wear fine clothes to church, would we treat them differently to someone dressed poorly? Would we ask someone who appears rich to sit in a nice chair, while ignoring another who seems poor? We should not, as James continues in verse 4, because that would be judging based on the wrong motives. Ps Frank reminds us of Jesus, who had respect and love for everyone no matter their appearance or background. Every person is made in the image of God. So, we should strive to do same, not writing people off, putting aside our selfish agendas and comparisons. This idea is echoed in verse 8: we are to follow the royal law, the ten commandments – love God first and foremost, and then love and honour everyone as we would love ourselves. To do this, we have to check the condition of our hearts. It is not a simple checklist of things that we can tick off, like do not be rich or give away money to the poor; having a lack of money does not preclude us from desiring money.

"If someone were to wear fine clothes to church, would we treat them differently to someone dressed poorly?"

Would we ask someone who appears rich to sit in a nice chair, while ignoring another who seems poor?"

Pastor Frank also notes that we should not be too quick to discount our abilities. It is easy to judge ourselves as not being able to serve, but God has given all of us different gifts, and we need to let God guide us on using these gifts to glorify Him.

JAMES SERMON REVIEW

By Ryan

Verses 10-13 are about yielding obedience to the whole law. In verse 10 and 11, James writes that if we offend just one commandment, we are breaking all the commandments. Sometimes we may fall into the thinking where some sins are worse than others, and some more acceptable, but this is not true. God cares about the whole law and hates all sin. Ps Frank gave the example of a chain, where if one link is broken, the whole chain, no matter the length, has failed. In verse 12, there is a mention of “the law of liberty”, by which all our actions will be judged. This sounds like a bit of an oxymoron, as we think of laws as rules and enforcement, so how can we have liberty? But when we come to know the Lord, we are freed from the power of sin and we want to obey all of the law. Verse 13 ends with a warning, God will judge without mercy on those who have shown no mercy, but for those who show mercy and follow the royal law, they will receive God’s mercy.

This message has been a good reminder to be aware of the sin of partiality, and how this goes against what we are commanded to do. Jesus is the best example of being humble and impartial. Jesus is God, yet He came down to Earth for us to die for our sins. He did not live an extravagant life and interacted with people from all walks of life. Let us do likewise, reaching out to everyone around us and spreading God’s love.



HAS GOD WITHHELD GOOD FROM ME?

Vaneetha Rendall Risner - DesiringGod.org

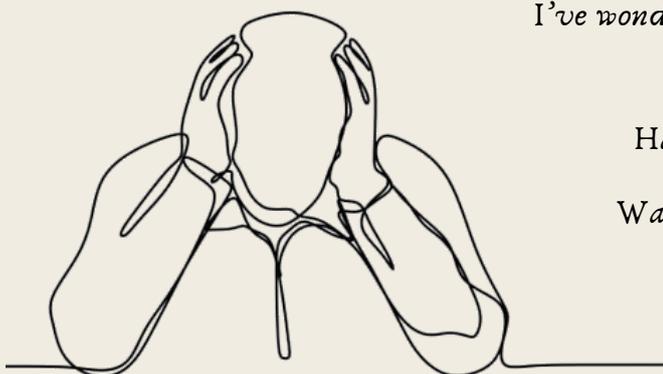
God wants to give us good things. Not only that, he promises good things to us and assures us they will all come to pass (Joshua 23:14). In fact, “No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly” (Psalm 84:11).

I love those promises, yet there are many good things that I’ve begged God for that I haven’t received. Good things like a healthy body, a thriving family, and a balanced, secure life. When my infant son died, after my first husband left, or as I’ve seen my body slowly deteriorating,

I’ve wondered why God did not answer my prayers for good things. Had I not been upright enough? Was I not asking the right way?

Or were God’s good things different than mine?

I know that I haven’t walked uprightly on my own, and I’m increasingly aware of my sin, but God sees me as righteous and perfect because of Christ’s blood. I need not fear that I’m not measuring up, that I’m not praying perfectly, or that God is denying me some essential good. He could not be more for me, and he will graciously give me all things (Romans 8:32), because he longs to give his children good gifts when they ask (Matthew 7:11). So, God’s definition of good things must be different than the earthly blessings I often think I need.



*I've wondered why God did not answer
my prayers for good things.*

Had I not been upright enough?

Was I not asking the right way?

*Or were God's good things
different than mine?*

HAS GOD WITHHELD GOOD FROM ME?

Vaneetha Rendall Risner - DesiringGod.org

What, then, are God's good things if they are not earthly blessings? How can we recognise them when our focus is riveted on our circumstances, especially those that feel unfair, unfixable, or unfinished?

Many of us have struggled for years, even decades, faithfully serving God but living with unfulfilled longings, broken dreams, and mounting losses. Do God's good things include those?

Hardship in Faithfulness

As we see in Scripture, the unfair, the unfixable, and the unfinished often mark the lives of God's chosen. Moses reluctantly accepted God's call, worked faithfully for decades, and then failed in a moment and never entered the Promised Land. Jeremiah was called by God to be a prophet, yet was persecuted all his days. An angel proclaimed to Mary that her Son would sit on the throne of David, yet she watched him die on a cross. John the Baptist was a faithful prophet who prepared the world for Christ, yet never served with him. None of these people saw the fulfilment of all God had spoken over their lives – they only embraced them from afar (Hebrews 11:13).

Though God commended these saints, their lives were often hard and lonely. Now we can look back and see how powerfully God used each of them, how God was with them, how they fulfilled the purpose that God called them to. We know that their suffering was not wasted and that God never left them, even when life didn't turn out as they had planned. And we know that they have received an "unfading crown of glory" (1 Peter 5:4), and that they are rejoicing because their suffering was not even worth comparing with the weight of glory they now enjoy (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17).

HAS GOD WITHHELD GOOD FROM ME?

Vaneetha Rendall Risner - DesiringGod.org

All their stories were part of God's larger story. A story that unfolded through Scripture. A story that God has used for generations to demonstrate who he is.

Could Adversity Be a Gift?

Can we look at our lives through the same lens, understanding that we are all in the middle of our stories and that our disappointments and missteps are all part of the beautiful story God is writing?

When we are discouraged at what's happening in our lives, we must remind ourselves that there's more to come. We are looking at one frame, or perhaps one scene in the story. We may see our circumstances dramatically change in this life, as Joseph did, or we may need to wait till heaven when it will all make sense to us. Either way, we will thank him for all of it. We can be assured that, if troubles were not beneficial to us, God would neither allow them nor send them. Everything God gives us and withholds from us must be part of his good things.

Sir Richard Baker, who was unjustly imprisoned in England in the seventeenth century, wrote,

But how is this true, when God oftentimes withholds riches and honors and health of body from men, though they walk never so uprightly? We may therefore know that honors and riches and bodily strength are none of God's good things; they are of the number of things indifferent which God bestows promiscuously upon the just and unjust, as the rain to fall and the sun to shine.

HAS GOD WITHHELD GOOD FROM ME?

Vaneetha Rendall Risner - DesiringGod.org

The good things of God are chiefly peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost in this life; fruition of God's presence, and vision of his blessed face in the next, and these good things God never bestows upon the wicked, never withholds from the godly.

The truly good things of God are bestowed on those he loves. His presence. His peace. Joy in the Spirit. The assurance of heaven and beholding his face. Nothing can take away these good things of God. They are independent of circumstances and often grow stronger in trials. Adversity may be one of God's best gifts because it makes us grab hold of God, desperate for his presence and peace. We cling to him more tightly when there is nothing else to cling to.

Best Things of God

King Solomon was given everything, including wisdom, riches, and fame, yet they did not knit him to God in love and gratitude. In the end, he turned from following God and clung to his foreign wives instead (1 Kings 11:2). Solomon didn't need to fight battles, to trust God for his life, to beg God for protection, or to worry about anything. He didn't experience the struggles that draw us to God and make us dependent on him. Perhaps that is why he drifted away – unlike his father David, he didn't hunger for God's presence or experience the intense fellowship that accompanies deep suffering.



HAS GOD WITHHELD GOOD FROM ME?

Vaneetha Rendall Risner - DesiringGod.org

For believers, the troubles of the world can be blessings because they draw us to God. We desperately long for God's presence, where we find fullness of joy that can never be taken away (Psalm 16:11; John 16:22). And we know that adversity can make us stronger, more compassionate, and more fruitful.

At the same time, there is nothing wrong with enjoying good things like honor and riches and good health. God created them, understands their value, and freely bestows them. But Christians should never mistake fame, money, and health for the best things of God. That distinction is reserved for the things that bring us closest to Jesus. It is often in our darkest moments, when we have nothing to hold on to but God, that we truly understand that "No good thing does he withhold from those who walk uprightly."

*No good thing does he
withhold from those who
walk uprightly.*

Psalm 84:11



bpilgrims



BPilgrims – Combined B-P Community



pilgrim



What to do with your sins?



How to overcome Obstacles In Prayer



Who is John Calvin?

Searching for more Christian content?
Head over to BPilgrims.com!