



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume IV
Issue 85

I Choose! Living Life to Its Fullest Part I

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

EACH NEW DAY: A GIFT FROM GOD

Life is such a wonderful gift from the hand of God. I choose to receive life as a precious expression of His goodness to me and honor His majesty by living out this gift to its fullest.

Each Day Is Like a Resurrection

In the Bible death is likened to sleep,¹ and resurrection is likened to awakening in the morning.² This being true, a reversal of the analogy is certainly very appropriate. Since none of us are even promised tomorrow,³ each new day is sort of a “resurrection from death.” Each morning is a new beginning, a fresh breath of air.

In 1728 William Law wrote beautifully regarding this similarity:

Receive every day as a resurrection from death, as a new enjoyment of life; meet every rising sun with such sentiments of God's goodness, as if you had seen it, and all things, new-created upon your account: and under the sense of so great a blessing, let your joyful heart praise and magnify so good and glorious a Creator.⁴

1. John 11:11,14; Psalm 13:3; Job 3:11-13; 7:21; Daniel 12:2; Acts 7:60; I Thessalonians 4:14.
2. Psalm 17:15; Daniel 12:2.
3. “Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away” (James 4:14).
4. *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life* (1728), William Law (1686-1761).

Others Can't Enjoy Today with Us

There are those who can no longer enjoy this day with us. Many of our friends and loved ones have died. They are no longer with us “*in the land of the living.*” They rest in death awaiting their resurrection. They are in safe keeping though, “*for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive*”(I Corinthians 15:22).

As we think of our sleeping loved ones, we miss their rich presence in our lives. They are not here to enjoy the simplest of earth's pleasures with us. We think of the dearly missed father or mother who is not here to see their children grow up. Our minds drift to the husband or wife who does not get to grow old with their beloved sweetheart.

While others, who were even younger than we, have been laid to rest, here we are recipients of another day – a new enjoyment of life. This day dawned and we have been richly blessed to see it! Enjoy the day! This is another day that we can be with our precious loved ones. Receive the sun as a welcomed sight in the morning! As we awake to see it streaming through our windows, we should thank God that He has given us life again – for yet another day. Life is but a manifest token of His sheer goodness to us.

Now granted, this life is filled with troubles;⁵ but as

5. “Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward” (Job 5:7).
“Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a
(continued on page 887)

Dear faithful,

Greetings in our Father's love and care.

It has been a few issues since I have written an editorial for you. We have needed the editorial space for articles and letters. We are, however, back for this issue.

Another BSN Milestone

We have reached yet another **BSN** milestone. Beginning with this issue we will now be publishing the **BSN** on a biweekly schedule (24 times a year). This has been on our hearts for some time. This is being done mainly because we are literally backlogged with material to publish. Publishing every two weeks will allow us to have a greater opportunity to come your way with material that we trust will prove to be edifying to you and your family.

A New Series This Issue

With this issue of the **BSN** we will begin a new series called "*I Choose!*" This is a series about *living life to its fullest*. This series will continue over the next few issues of the **BSN**. In this series I will be sharing with you some of the most basic and yet most important truths that I have ever been so privileged to share with you.

What follows is a collection of life-changing words from God. God has used these truths and verses greatly in my own life. They have had a great spiritual affect upon my own heart and attitude. Unlike my normal style of writing, I will be utilizing the first person. I have done so because they have been first and foremost written for my personal life.

I encourage you to allow your hearts and minds to meditate upon these rich truths. Read and re-read them. Ponder them, turn them over – cultivating them in your hearts. Gradually they will change your life. Just like a grain of corn, plant these scriptural thoughts daily in your inner man. The divine harvest will come.

I do not present these truths in any special order. They are presented to you in the same basic manner that they were written – as they came to my heart. The order is not the issue; the truth presented is.

"Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all" (1 Timothy 4:15).

My love to you dear ones!

Your fellow,



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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This weekly publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7)
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11)
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25)
- true freedom and liberty apart from the law (Galatians 5:1)
- the organic nature of the church, the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12)
- the distinct ministry of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13)
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15)
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13).
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with ...
 - total forgiveness of sins (Colossians 1:14)
 - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6)
 - adult sonship position (Galatians 4)

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any "church," "denomination," "movement," "organization," "mission," "creed," "meeting," "school," "conference" or "fellowship."

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Patriarchs

Remember that it is our responsibility as husbands and fathers to take the truths we learn from God's Word, the truths that we hold dear, and impart them to our families.

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(recompiled and edited)

you change your flat tire, do not fret, but rejoice that you are alive to do so. As you move items from your broken refrigerator, thank the Lord that you are here and able to experience such. As you have the heartbreak of the loss of a loved one, rejoice that your heart is alive even to have such passionate feelings.

God's Fresh Handiwork

Yet life is abundantly filled with more than just trouble. Stand in wonder and amazement at the fresh handiwork of God that is all around us. It is there for the watchful eye. Life has been given to us this very day as a gift – a grand and glorious gift. Enjoy it to its fullest!

*"The Lord's mercies ... are **new every morning**: great is Thy faithfulness"*
(Lamentations 3:22-23).

*"The goodness of God endureth **continually**"*
(Psalms 52:1).

Live in the day! Enjoy life in each of its moments. Don't live in the past, or in the future. Today is God's gift to you – the present.

Don't Waste Today on the Past

Many days from the past may call for us to live in them – with their failures and regrets. "What if I had made a different choice?" "What if I hadn't moved?" "What if I had ...?" By giving ourselves over to these "What ifs" we waste and lose life *now* – the present.

Even days of past success can summon us to live in them, but as we do so, we can miss today. Don't miss the victories of today while living in the past – even the achievements of the past.

Don't Waste Today on the Future

Then there are our imagined days of the future – how they beckon us to give them our attention, with all their fears and anxieties regarding the unknown. "What if I lose my job?" "What if the stock market falls?" "What if my spouse dies?" What if ... Don't lose the present on your runaway train of imagined

shadow, and continueth not" (Job 14:1-2).

scenarios about the future. These endless "possibilities" that your mind can conjure up will only rob you of the *real* life that God has given you today.

"Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil [trouble] thereof" (Matthew 6:34).

Don't allow your "What if ..." imaginations of the past or the future to lay claim to your present from God. Allow God to transform your mind, casting down "imaginations."

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Corinthians 10:5).

Praise God with the Living of Each New Day

How can we not praise and magnify our good and glorious Creator *every* new day? How can we not do so from hearts filled with the joy of life? How can we who know Him be genuinely tempted to murmur and complain? We are alive! – not just alive, but alive with His *very* life!

"O give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good: for His mercy endureth for ever" (Psalms 107:1).

EVERY DAY IS A CHOICE

Life is made up of choices – daily choices. These choices are not related to a list of dos and don'ts.

"Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men"
(Colossians 2:21-22).

They are choices about who and what God has made us in Christ. These choices are about apprehending the divine viewpoint of life – about what is real, what is important. These choices are simply about believing God.

Awaking each morning as the sons of God, we have the distinct privilege to choose the things of our

Father, and it centers on our daily viewpoint. It is about attitude, outlook, mind-set, and perspective. Shall we awake and approach the day as mere mortals, or shall we be *“followers of God, as dear children”* (Ephesians 5:1)?

The Center of Our Spiritual Battles

“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (II Corinthians 10:4).

There are tremendous strongholds against which believers must “stand” and “fight.” These strongholds are non-divine patterns of thinking which have a profound affect on our feelings, and how we respond to the circumstances in our lives. Most importantly they keep us in bondage so that we can’t appreciate and enjoy our true spiritual freedom in Christ.

Strongholds are based upon deceptive human viewpoint. The source of these strongholds are varied – our parents, peers, family, friends, education, society, and religion – to name a few.

Strongholds are built when we accept and receive information contrary to the divine viewpoint, and then allow our minds to harbor them, meditating on them. These strongholds are extremely deceptive and form in our minds what is known as an *“imagination,”* that is, a false concept that we believe to be true, but in reality is not. The strongholds carry our imaginations away hostage. We imagine everything possible – outside of the life and knowledge of God.

Strongholds Against God

These strongholds battle against the very person of God, exalting themselves against His viewpoint. They oppose the life of God in the believer, preventing us from enjoying all that God has for us, keeping our minds in confusion and in bondage to fear.

Do not underestimate the enormous power these strongholds have upon us. As the word implies they

have “hold” of our thinking processes, and they are very “strong” – thus “strong-holds.”

Pull Down, Cast Down

Strongholds of imaginations must be pulled and cast down, but how? Well, we in and of ourselves are personally powerless. They are beyond our own ability to overthrow; but the divine weapons of our warfare are completely sufficient – they are mighty to pull and cast down these well established dictators. They are *“mighty through God”* – to the pulling down of strongholds. This, Paul calls elsewhere, is *the renewing of our minds.*

Renewing of Our Minds

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:2).

God’s will in us is that our minds are de-conformed to the world around us and made new. Just how are our minds renewed? Through the washing of the Word our minds are transformed and strongholds are torn down. Meditating on the divine viewpoint washes our minds and corrects these false thinking patterns that have such a strong hold upon us.

“That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:26-27).

Think on These Things

Life depends upon our thinking.

“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7).

We are to give our minds over to God for divine thinking. This is a daily choice – we are to *“think on these things.”* As we meditate and wash our minds with God’s Word, we will be transformed by the renewing of our minds and will come to know the will of God, enjoying the life of God liberated in the

details of our daily lives.

“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you” (Philippians 4:6-9).

If we fill our thoughts with spiritual truths we will reap spiritual life. As His words fill and permeate our hearts, God’s very life and will can operate in and through us as His vessels.

Every day is a choice.

I CHOOSE ... LIFE

This life is about making daily choices. Not just “good” choices ... but the best, excellent choices. As I awake this morning I choose ... LIFE.

I Choose Life Abundant

“... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

I Choose to Reign in Life

“For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:17).

I Choose the Newness of Life

“Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even

so we also should walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4).

I Choose Life Rooted in a Spiritual Mind

“For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace” (Romans 8:6).

I Choose His Life, Manifest in Me

“Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh” (II Corinthians 4:10-11).

I Choose Christ Uniquely Alive in Me

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

Today I choose *life!* I will not just exist, but I will live. I choose His life over Adamic deadness. I choose to live in Him – Who is my *Life* (Colossians 3:4).

I choose the rich vitality of divine life living in me.

Today I choose life.

I CHOOSE ... LOVE

As this day dawns, I choose divine love. I choose to live in the *love* of God. Love is the greatest of all.

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity” (I Corinthians 13:13).

Today I may excel in everything else, but without love I have failed and am nothing. All is empty and vain without love.

“Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing” (I Corinthians 13:1-3).

Today I choose to place importance on what God deems valuable above all other things – love!

“And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness” (Colossians 3:14).

I Choose to Live in the Love of God

I choose to walk in the realization of His love for me. He commended His love to me, even while I was a sinner (Romans 5:8). His love toward me is great (Ephesians 2:4), pouring out in my heart (Romans 5:5), passing knowledge – thus filling me with all His fullness (Ephesians 3:19); and nothing can separate me from it (Romans 8:35)!

God’s love will never expire – “never faileth” (I Corinthians 13:8).

I Choose His Constraining Love

I choose to love my wonderful and glorious Savior with all that I have, as my all in all. I will love Him today, because He first loved me (I John 4:19). How can I not be constrained by such an endless and matchless love as His!

“For the love of Christ constraineth us ...” (II Corinthians 5:14).

I Choose to Walk in Love

“And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us ...” (Ephesians 5:2).

I Choose Love, Not Law

I choose the spirit of love today, for love needs no law.

“... Love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:10).

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Galatians 5:14)

“Now the end of the commandment is charity ...” (I Timothy 1:5)

“And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins” (I Peter 4:8).

“... Love covereth all sins” (Proverbs 10:12).

I Choose to Love My Wife

I choose to allow the Lord Jesus Christ to express the greatness of His love through me, to my wife. I choose to give my life for her.

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25).

“Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself ...” (Ephesians 5:33).

“Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them” (Colossians 3:19).

I Choose to Love Others

“But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another” (I Thessalonians 4:9).

“And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you” (I Thessalonians 3:12).

I Choose the Spirit’s Fruit of Love

Today I will allow God’s Spirit to have His way in my life.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love ...” (Galatians 5:22).

I Choose to Be Rooted and Grounded in Love

“... That ye, being rooted and grounded in love” (Ephesians 3:17).

I Choose to Speak Truth in Love

When speaking the truth, I will do so in a loving way.

“But speaking the truth in love ...” (Ephesians 4:15).

I Choose Love’s Edification

“From Whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:16).

I Choose to Let My Love Abound More and More

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment” (Philippians 1:9).

I Choose to Labor in Love

In all that my hands do today, I will do them in love.

“Remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love ...” (I Thessalonians 1:3).

I Choose for God to Direct My Heart in Love

“And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God ...” (II Thessalonians 3:5).

I Choose to Love Myself

I realize that the foundation of me loving my wife, and me loving others is based upon me loving myself first. So, today I choose to love myself.

“... Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Romans 13:9).

“So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself” (Ephesians 5:28).

I Choose Love in All Things

“Let all your things be done with charity” (I Corinthians 16:14).

I choose to fill my day with that which is most important! For what is my life without love? LOVE and LIVE; I switch but a single letter and they are just the same. The only difference is ... “I.”

Today I choose love.

I CHOOSE ... ACCEPTANCE

I Choose to Receive Others

I choose to receive others as Christ has received me.

“Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God” (Romans 15:7).

I Choose Not to Judge Others

I choose not to be the Lord in anyone else’s life.

“Who art thou that judgest another man’s servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth ...” (Romans 14:4a).

“But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ” (Romans 14:10).

“Let us not therefore judge one another any more ...” (Romans 14:13).

I Choose Not to Condemn

I will allow the divine purpose of the life of Christ to live in me.

“For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved”(John 3:17).

I Choose Not to Be Sectarian

I choose life without walls of division.

“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Ephesians 4:3).

In the midst of all the denominational divisions in the body of Christ, I am called to take the high ground. God has united believers into one body by the unity of the Spirit. I will endeavor to keep it.

Regardless of what low, earthly divisions others may embrace, I am called to see fellow believers as only in Christ. This is the ground of my relationship with them, nothing else. I have been called to take the high, heavenly ground.

Today I choose acceptance.

I CHOOSE ... PATIENCE

I Choose to Walk in Patience and Longsuffering

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love” (Ephesians 4:1-2).

“Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness” (Colossians 1:11).

“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering” (Colossians 3:12).

“Follow after ... patience ...” (I Timothy 6:11).

I Choose to Follow My Father in Longsuffering

“Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering ... ?”

(Romans 2:4).

“... God ... endured with much longsuffering ...” (Romans 9:22).

“... The fruit of the Spirit is ... longsuffering” (Galatians 5:22).

I Choose Christ's Life of Longsuffering Living in Me

I choose to be injured and to suffer without opening my mouth.

“He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth ...” (Isaiah 53:7).

“Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, he threatened not; but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously” (I Peter 2:23).

I choose this very life of Christ, patiently living in me to its fullest.

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me, and gave Himself for me” (Galatians 2:20).

Today I choose patience.

(To be continued.)

*We practice daily
what we believe:
all the rest is just
religious talk.*

Peter M. Lord
Bless and Be Blessed (2004),
page 131