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As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another. Proverbs 27:17

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Women Empowering Women

“Shout out to all the Ladies in TCF”

I wish more women realized that **helping**
another win,
Cheering her on,
Praying for her,
Or **sharing** a resource with her,
Does **NOT** take away from the blessings
coming to them.
But instead, they'd realize that the more
you give, the more you receive.
Empowering women doesn't come from
selfishness,
But rather **selflessness.**

1 Peter 3:8

“Words to Grow By”

LINDA LEWIS, GMI DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNICATIONS

Rescue Me

Almighty God, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, come to my help and deliver me from this difficulty that besets me. I believe Lord, that all trials of life are under your care and that all things work for the good of those who love you. Take away from me fear, anxiety and distress. Help me to face and endure my difficulty with faith, courage and wisdom. Grant that this trial may bring me closer to you for you are my rock and refuge, my comfort and hope, my delight and joy. I trust in your love and compassion. Blessed is your name, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen

Trust and believe...He's able!

Matthew 6:24-26

Jehosphaphat BY PASTOR MIKE HERNANDEZ, CHURCH OF THE HARVEST



One of the greatest stories of forgiveness is the story of Joseph. Joseph was Jacob's favorite son and he had 11 brothers and he was the second youngest. When Joseph was 17, God gave him two dreams - the first was that as he and his brothers were binding sheaves, his sheaf arose and his brother's sheaves bowed to it. Of course, this made his brothers hate him. In his second dream, the sun, moon and 11 stars bowed to him. This moved his brothers from hatred to envy.

Once when Joseph's brothers were watching the sheep in a nearby village, Jacob sent Joseph to find out what they were doing (he had already snitched on them once before). When his brothers saw him coming, they communicated among each other about destroying his dreams. We need to understand that when God gives us dreams, even those closest to us may not understand and/or stop us from achieving our dreams.

It was at this time that Joseph's brothers decided to take action. First they took his robe (a colorful robe given as a special gift from his father) and then they threw him in a pit. They talked about killing him but in the end, decided to sell him to some merchants going to Egypt. So Joseph went from being the favored son in his wealthy family to being sold as a slave in a foreign country.

But God's hand was upon him. Of all the people that could have purchased Joseph, Potiphar, the Captain of the Guard, purchased him.

"The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian. And his master saw that the Lord made all he did to prosper in his hand. So Joseph found favor in his sight, and served him. Then he made him overseer of his house, and all that he had he put under his authority." - Genesis 39:2-4

After Joseph was betrayed by his brothers, he could have given up on life, he could have had a pity party but instead, he made the best of a bad situation. He served Potiphar to the best of his ability and not only found favor, but was promoted. Joseph was put in charge of Potiphar's entire house!

The Bible says that Joseph was handsome in form and appearance (I know some of you can relate). And his looks got him into a little trouble as he caught the attention of Potiphar's wife. As Captain of the Guard, Potiphar was a wealthy and powerful man. Now I may be taking a little liberty in guessing that wealthy and powerful men in Egypt at that time had beautiful wives so the woman making advances on Joseph was probably good looking. But even when faced with temptation, he did not want to do this great wickedness and sin against God (Gen 39:9). Joseph's reward for doing the right thing and saying no to Potiphar's wife was to be falsely accused and thrown into prison.

We don't know how long Joseph was in prison, but we know it was for at least several years. I wonder if he ever doubted God while in prison. I wonder if he forgot about his dreams. I wonder if he became discouraged or even forgotten. I wonder if he ever felt like quitting. We may never know the answers to these questions, but what we do know is that he continued to be faithful and was once again promoted. Joseph was given the responsibility to watch over Pharaoh's prisoners.

"And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them; so they were in custody for a while." - Genesis 40:4

Jehosphaphat con't. BY PASTOR MIKE HERNANDEZ

Did you catch that? Who put the prisoners in Joseph's care? The Captain of the Guard. Who was Captain of the Guard? None other than Potiphar! So could it be that Potiphar kept Joseph under his command? Why would he do that? Maybe it was because he didn't believe his wife's accusation against Joseph but since the accusation was in front of the entire household, Potiphar couldn't let Joseph live there anymore. Maybe it was because Potiphar was blessed when Joseph took care of his house. Maybe this was God's plan all along.

Through amazing circumstances (interpretation of dreams) Joseph was promoted to second in command in all of Egypt. His responsibility was to oversee the storage of grain for a famine that was forthcoming. Once the famine hit, all the people, including those coming from foreign nations came to Egypt to buy food. Part of the procurement process was presenting themselves to Joseph.

One day, Joseph's ten older brothers bowed before him so they could buy food. They did not recognize their brother as he was dressed as an Egyptian, but Joseph recognized them. At that moment, he also remembered his dreams...dreams he received over 20 years earlier. (Side note, whenever we get a dream from God, we need to recognize that the dream will take time, even many years to come to fulfillment.)

Joseph asked his brothers many questions and found out his dad was still alive as was his little brother. Through manipulating the food situation, Joseph created a scenario that allowed his little brother to stay with him so he could be protected from his older brothers. What Joseph didn't plan on was the response from his older brothers (the same brothers who sold him into slavery); they were willing to take their little brother's place as Joseph's slave. At this moment, Joseph broke and revealed himself to his brothers.

"And God sent me before you to preserve a posterity for you in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you who sent me here, but God." - Genesis 45:7-8a

One of the keys for Joseph to be able to forgive his brothers was that he realized that even though his brothers intended harm, God was able to use it for good. In fact, Joseph went so far as to say that it was God who sent him to Egypt, not his brothers. So seeing God's perspective on a situation helps us move towards forgiveness.

Also (and this doesn't happen in every situation), Joseph saw brokenness, remorse and repentance from his brothers. This also helped him realize that his brothers learned from their past indiscretions and changed. This made forgiveness easier for Joseph.

Forgiveness is never easy. We have been wounded. We have received pain. We have been rejected. We have been wronged. We have been violated. But what I have learned about forgiveness is that forgiveness is a choice. And it's a choice that I can only make through the power of God. I don't always want to forgive but I know God wants me to forgive.

I would like to end by sharing one line from the song titled Forgiveness by Matthew West - "The prisoner that it really frees is you...Forgiveness".

Hearing from God (Pt. 3) BY BEVERLY BROWN, GMI VOLUNTEER WRITER

We have been talking about ways God speaks to us.

We discussed the most common way which is through **His Word, the Bible**. And the next most common way which is **to our spirit**.

This and next month we will talk about less common ways. I will give personal examples of each of those ways.

Sometimes God speaks to us through people. Often it is through other Christians, but not always.

When my children were very young, I had a neighbor, Sally, who had Multiple Sclerosis. But she had many other issues as well.

Sally would go from house to house looking for someone to invite her in to visit. She was not socially adept and stayed for hours with very little being said. So our neighbors got to the point they would not let her in.

I felt sorry for her so would let her in even though the visit was almost like trying to visit with a three-year-old. Not like visiting with any of the other neighbors.

I kept thinking of the Bible verse that says, "If you do it to the least of them, you do it to Me."

Neighbors would remark, "Bev, you're so nice to let Sally visit you. None of the rest of us want to let her in."

Letting her visit became the beginning of other things with her.

Sally constantly wanted me to take her places. And I usually did—even though it meant dropping whatever I was doing and getting three small kids and myself ready to go. Most of these trips were not necessary at all.

After seeing someone leave my house, she would call me to see if she could come over because that other person had.

She would actually step out into the street in front of my car when she saw me going someplace—to see if she could go with me wherever I was going.

She called my house continually. She kept her eye on my comings and goings. Nowadays, one might say she stalked me.

During this same time, my children had to go to the doctor on a regular basis for one reason or another. My father was dying of cancer. And I had a health issue that required regular visits to the doctor.

And then, in addition to everything else, I started having pains in my stomach. The only thing that relieved them was to press a pillow against it.

But, still, I kept thinking, "If you do this to the least of them, you do it to Me."

Lord, isn't this what I'm supposed to be doing?

But I felt like I could not handle any more.

At the end of one of my regular visits to the doctor, he looked at me and said, "Now. What else?"

"I've been having pains in my stomach."

He had me lie down and felt around that area. "Sweetheart, I think the pains are from your nerves."

As I sat up, I burst into tears. I told him about Sally and everything I had been dealing with.

My precious doctor said, "Sally is not your responsibility. She is her husband's responsibility. You have all you can handle with your kids, your dad and yourself. She is not your responsibility."

I knew the Lord had spoken to me through my doctor. I felt the Lord was telling me it was okay for me not to be Sally's everything. The burden was lifted. I was able to keep healthy boundaries with her after that.

I can give you more examples of how the Lord has used others to speak to me.

One I've learned is that the Lord will speak to us about things that have been on our heart and often things we have been praying about—through different ways.

Next month we will talk more about ways He speaks to us.

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Things that make you go Hmmmmm or Giggle...



NEXT TIME WHEN I PREACH ON TITHING, DON'T SING 'JESUS PAID IT ALL' AS OUR INVITATIONAL HYMN

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Thanks to Tobias Nilsson

02-22-2008

SURE I KNOW MY BODY IS A TEMPLE ... I'M JUST A MEGA-CHURCH



AT THE OFFICES OF "THE CHILDREN'S ILLUSTRATED BIBLE"...

Hold on, Bob! We think there might be a typo in that verse!

Then the Spirit led Jesus into the desert to be tempted by Santa.

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- If Mary had Jesus, and Jesus was a little lamb... **Does that mean Mary had a little lamb?**
- What kind of man was Boaz before he married Ruth? **Absolutely ruthless!**
- Who is the greatest babysitter mentioned in the Bible? **David — he rocked Goliath to a very deep sleep**
- What do we have that Adam never had? **Ancestors.**
- Who do mice pray to? **Cheesus.**
- How long did Cain hate his brother? **As long as he was Abel.**
- Why did Noah have to punish and discipline the chickens on the Ark? **They were using fowl language.**



Saint Patrick's Day

Find the hidden words within the grid of letters.

L G N P I P A H L C S S F H T Y F C J I
 A R U D J A C N I U Y H O I R G A J R Y
 V E A Z N R Z F N Z K L A A V B K I S D
 I E H H A A D S N A Y E N M B D S C D D
 T N C M Y D L O T T L O W A R H C D I A
 S C E N E E G E R N I S G A N O Z W U P
 E L R G O S H I R S I E O A D I C R R C
 F O P F I C N R S I P A T F B D F K D I
 N T E M I I A I B S F I S I U Z I X Z T
 A H L A T J M E M N O O G N Q L A N W S
 I I M Y J U W N D N G N C C O B S F G A
 T N R A D N E L A C L A C I G R U T I L
 S G S L A V E L P O H S I B L A T M E P
 I P C I L O H T A C N A M O R B X A J R
 R H O B F O F E E B D E N R O C U K P S
 H J B B L A R N E Y S T O N E Q V P S G
 C P M I H Y N I J F L I Y V W P Y U E F
 B N D N W T Q Z M M A R D I G R A S E R
 B A I L E Y S I R I S H C R E A M U H H
 Y Y I L V P O I Z Y I Z D D A G P P O F

Annals of Ulster

Bailey's Irish Cream

bishop

Blarney Stone

cabbage

Christian Festival

corned beef

deacon

druids

green clothing

Holy Trinity

Irish National Holiday

Leprechaun

liturgical calendar

Luke Wadding

March

Mardi Gras

missionary

parades

patron saints

Plastic Paddy

Republic of Ireland

Roman Catholic

shamrock

A Bonus Puzzle

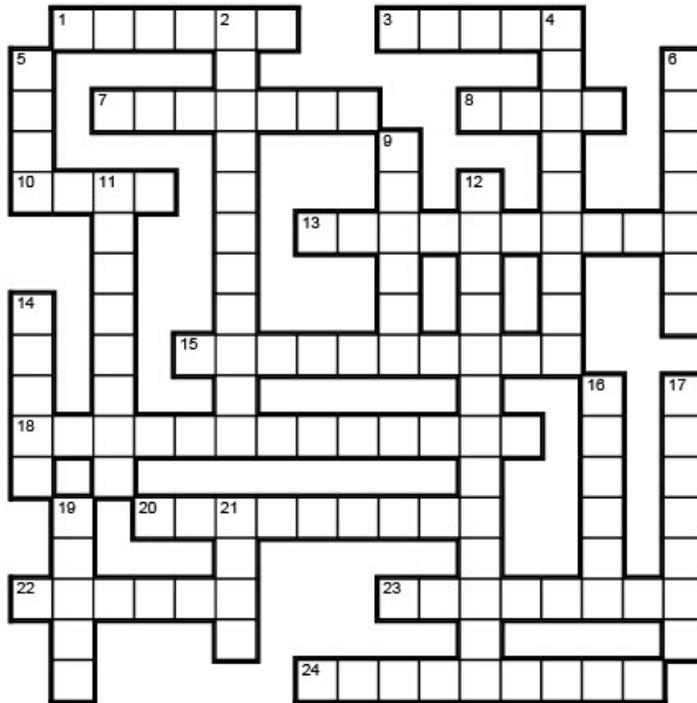
THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Across

- 1 Not to be put under a bushel. (6)
- 3 Let yours shine before men! (5)
- 7 Moth and rust will do this to your earthly store. (7)
- 8 If you do this, you will find. (4)
- 10 These should not be done in view of men. (4)
- 13 The eight sayings by Christ at the beginning of his sermon. (10)
- 15 They sound trumpets in the streets when they are being charitable. (10)
- 18 The peacemakers will be called this. (8,2,3)
- 20 They were with Jesus when he gave the sermon. (9)
- 22 You can't serve God and this. (6)
- 23 Fellow believers. (8)
- 24 The earth is this to God. (9)

Down

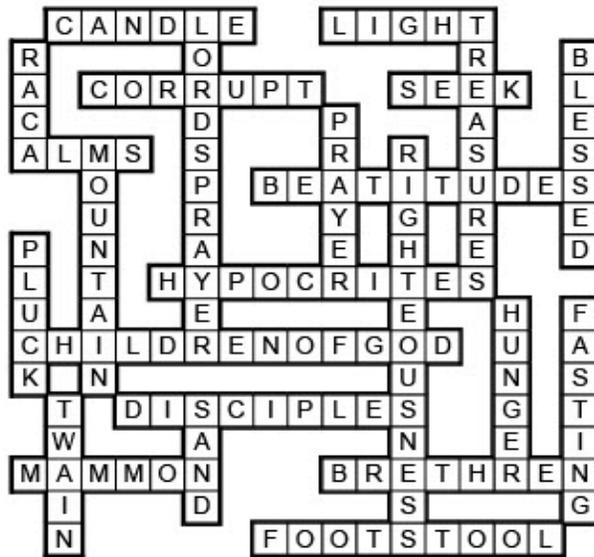
- 2 Jesus gave this as example of how to communicate with God. (5,6)



BiblePuzzles.org.uk

- 4 Don't lay these upon the earth. (9)
- 5 Whoever says this to his brother shall be in danger of the council. (4)
- 6 Those who are given happiness and good fortune. (7)
- 9 When engaging in this, you should enter into your closet and shut the door. (6)
- 11 Where the sermon was given. (8)
- 12 You should search for this first, before worrying about food and clothing. (13)
- 14 What you should do to your eye if it offends. (5)
- 16 They which do this shall be filled. (6)
- 17 The hypocrites disfigured their faces while doing this. (7)
- 19 If you are forced to go a mile with someone, this is how far you should go. (5)
- 21 The foolish man built his house on this. (4)

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT - SOLUTION



Across: 1 Candle, 3 Light, 7 Corrupt, 8 Seek, 10 Alms, 13 Beatitudes, 15 Hypocrites, 18 Children of God, 20 Disciples, 22 Mammon, 23 Brethren, 24 Footstool.

Down: 2 Lord's prayer, 4 Treasures, 5 Raca, 6 Blessed, 9 Prayer, 11 Mountain, 12 Righteousness, 14 Pluck, 16 Hunger, 17 Fasting, 19 Twain, 21 Sand.

Bible Crossword by BiblePuzzles.org.uk

DID YOU KNOW ST. PATRICK'S DAY HAS CHRISTIAN ORIGINS?

Many people observe Saint Patrick's Day and see it as a fun way to celebrate Irish culture. However, there is actually much more to the holiday than people realize. Before the parades, green beer and leprechauns, there was a man named Saint Patrick who was lighting a fire in pagan 5th century Ireland. A man who was willing to stand the gap for Jesus Christ and usher in Christianity into the country.

Patrick was only 16 when he was captured in a raid and became a slave in Ireland. Ireland in the year 405 was radically pagan and hadn't been very accepting of Christian beliefs. Patrick clung to the Christian faith during this time, despite having largely ignored it in his earlier teen years. His grandfather was a priest and his father was a town councilor, however Patrick admitted that he had yet to really know God. In fact, he even considered himself an atheist at one point.

But while being forced into slavery and having to tend to his master's sheep, he spent the majority of his free time in prayer. Patrick felt that he was being punished by God for not being a believer. Patrick recounts his time as a slave in his memoir titled "The Confession."

In the memoir Patrick writes: "I prayed a hundred times in the day and almost as many at night."

After a dream suggested he escape, he left Ireland and returned home. He had written in his memoir, "I heard in my sleep a voice saying to me: 'It is well that you fast. Soon you will go to your own country.' And again, after a short while, I heard a voice saying to me: 'See, your ship is ready.'"

Once home, Patrick became much more involved in ministry. He struggled deeply trying to understand if he should go back to Ireland and minister to those who had enslaved him. He turned to God in prayer and received an answer in a dream. Patrick knew he had to return and convinced the church to send him on a small ship back to the island.

Patrick didn't return to Ireland until his mid-40s. At the time, Ireland had been plagued with war, violence, and death. The place had become much worse than the last time Patrick was there.

Saint Palladius had not been very successful in his mission to bring Christianity over, and the returning of Patrick replaced his efforts. Patrick, having spent more time intimately with the people of Ireland, was able to build a more effective strategy. Patrick was familiar with the Irish clan system because his former master, Milchu, had been a chieftain. Patrick began to convert the chiefs first, who would then convert their clans through their influence. Milchu was reportedly one of the earliest converts.

Patrick would preach the gospel, baptize converts, confirm them and help appoint clergy. His ministry lasted 29 years, and he baptized over 120,000 Irishmen and planted 300 churches. Patrick helped Ireland become known as one of Europe's Christian centers. Though Patrick didn't convert the island all by himself, his missionary journeys improved the rate of converts.

If He Did It, So Can You!



A former prison inmate is sharing his story of redemption and second chances, and how Jesus' grace changed his life, which pushed him to become a successful lawyer.

Shon Hopwood received a 12-year sentence in 1998 for robbing five different banks. While serving time, prison officials assigned him to work at the correctional facility's library.

The inmate then poured his energy into reading books about law in the hopes of getting a legal relief on his case. Eventually, he also helped out other inmates.

"I found that I had an aptitude for the law and started helping other prisoners while I was there.

Hopwood's life took a surprisingly good turn when two of the cases he filed before the U.S. Supreme Court won. He was also asked to work on a case with prominent lawyer and former U.S. solicitor general Seth Waxman. The latter would become Hopwood's legal mentor in his remaining years in prison, as he told "60 Minutes."

Today, Hopwood is a teacher in criminal law at Georgetown University. In the first few years after he got out of prison, however, Hopwood said that he couldn't find a well-paying job right away despite his reputation for helping win cases. And he found his criminal record to be an obstacle.

The former convict, however, did not lose hope and acknowledged that Jesus Christ influenced his second shot at a good life. "Grace is the primary reason for my success.

But Hopwood did not convert to Christianity while in prison. That happened when he got out and was planning to get married to Annie Metzner, a woman who wrote to him frequently during his incarceration. A family minister told the couple that they had to undergo pre-marital counseling, but they ended up talking about Jesus.

"He laid out the gospel and asked us what we believed," Hopwood said. "[I realized] I needed Jesus bad. I prayed for Jesus to forgive me of my sins."

Closing Words LONNIE JOHNSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, GROWTH MINISTRIES INC

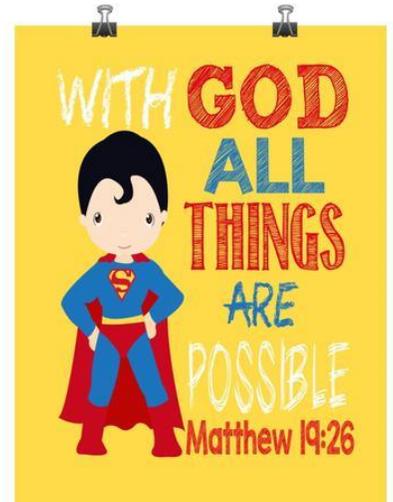
What is your superpower?

At age 57 I still love superhero movies, cartoons and comics. Superman, The Avengers, Green Lantern, you name 'em, I geek out over em. The little boy in me just won't let it go, but the adult in me knows they are not real. I know that they are fictional and that their superpowers are a figment of the imagination of their literary creators.

But there is a power that we all have access to. A power that **is** supernatural. A power that can move mountains, heal the sick, raise the dead and cast out demons. This power is so potent, it raised Jesus Christ himself from the grave after he had been crucified on a cross, after his hands and feet had been nailed with something that looked like railroad spikes. He was stabbed in the side with a spear for good measure and he bled to death. Yep, that's real "**super**" power indeed.

If you have accepted Christ as your personal savior, that same power is inside you. That's right. You have superpowers. You have power that gives you faith to heal the sick (Matthew. 10:8), you have the power of 'life and death' in your tongue (Proverbs 18:21), you literally have the power to do all things you put your mind to (Philippians 4:13). Many people don't realize how much power they really have. They think because they don't have a religious title like Pastor, Prophet or Bishop they cannot do the things I just named. But this great power resides in everyone that has become one of Christ's disciples (followers).

So, the next time your archenemy (Satan) approaches you, plant your feet, square your shoulders, hold your chin up and look that villain in the eye and shoot him your favorite scripture, use your faith to believe that "greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" and command that scoundrel to "get behind you". You can use your power to speak to **any** negative situation in your life.



Write Us

We would love to hear from you. If you have a testimony, a prayer request or a question about your walk with the Lord, send us a letter. We would love to pray or rejoice with you. Maybe you are a writer and you have a spiritual word of encouragement for the readers of our newsletter. We would love to review your article to see if we can use it in our newsletter. We also like to share poems from you more artistic sisters and brothers.

What must I do to be saved?

If you have never accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior, or if you have turned away from Him living a life of unrighteousness and wish to be connected to Him, then take a moment and say this prayer:

“Lord, I confess that I am a sinner and ask for your forgiveness. I believe that your son Jesus died on the cross for my sins and was resurrected with all power. I invite Jesus to be the Lord of my life and your Holy Spirit to come into my heart to guide me for the rest of my days. Amen.”



Romans 10:9 says that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

If this is you, please write Growth Ministries and we will gladly help you start your new life in Christ.

Growth Ministries, Inc., Attn: Executive Secretary, P.O. Box 4375, Olathe, KS 66063