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*"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2)*

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## AGAINST THE CURRENT

One of the most remarkable spectacles in nature is the return of salmon to their birthplace to spawn. These fish battle swift currents, leap waterfalls, dodge hungry bears, etc. all to return to the exact location where they were hatched. Depending on the species, young salmon may spend anywhere from a few weeks up to two years in freshwater streams and lakes before heading out to sea. Once reaching the ocean, it will be between one and eight years before they are instinctively drawn back to the place of their birth.

Salmon hatch in the relative safety of shallow upstream creeks

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and rivers throughout the Pacific Northwest. As they grow, they move to locations where they can find food to feed their growing bodies. Each time they move to find a better food source they are also exposing themselves to more danger from predators. Eventually they reach the open ocean where they face danger in all shapes and sizes.

In many ways our development as humans shares many things in common with the salmon. We are born into the relatively safe world where our parents protect us from danger. As we grow older we are exposed to not just physical dangers, but things that are dangerous to us emotionally and spiritually. And just as the salmon must eventually leave the safety of the stream where it hatched and enter the ocean, so too we must leave the safety and protection of our parent's home and venture out into the world on our own.

We know that God has given the salmon an instinct to return home at the appropriate time in order to breed and begin the cycle over again. I think He has done something similar for us as well. I believe he has given us an instinct, a nature, to seek Him. Is this not what Paul was referring to when he said,

*For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse. (Rom. 1:20)*

Even without God's Word, we can still know He exists just by looking at His creation. I believe this is why throughout history even the remotest, most primitive peoples ever found have all had some sort of religion. It is in our nature to seek God, even if we lack direct knowledge of Him. Notice what Paul also said in the next chapter of Romans:

*For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts. (Rom. 2:14-15)*

How did the law become written in their hearts if they did not have the law, unless God Himself put it there?

God warned Israel about the consequences of disobedience before they ever inherited the Promised Land.

*And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord shall lead you. And there ye shall serve gods, the work of men's hands, wood and stone, which neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. (Deu. 4:27-29)*

Is this not reminiscent of the salmon scattering throughout the ocean until God calls them back home? The key is that Israel was to seek God with all of their heart and soul.

Our service to God needs to have the same type of singular focus that the salmon exhibit as they make their final voyage. No obstacle, no danger will deter them. Is this not what God expects of us? Trials, tribulation, persecution, none of it should matter to us or get in our way. As Paul said, “*I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*” (Php. 3:14).

Instinct draws salmon home to spawn just as God intended. We were given a similar instinct to draw us home to our God and Creator, in whose image we are made. He has sent us forth into the world, but it is His intent that we return to Him and inherit the home He has prepared for us.

TONY WHIDDON  
(Roanoke, AL)

**A BIBLE THAT IS FALLING APART  
OFTEN BELONGS TO SOMEONE WHO ISN'T**

## IN A WORTHY MANNER

On the night that he was betrayed, Jesus gave us what we call the Lord's Supper.

*And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. (Mat. 26:26-28)*

The Corinthian church had many problems, not the least of which was the way they observed the Lord's Supper.

*Now in this that I declare unto you I praise you not, that ye come together not for the better, but for the worse. For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. When ye come together therefore into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's supper. For in eating every one taketh before other his own supper: and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What? have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise ye the church of God, and shame them that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. (1 Cor. 11:17-22)*

What the Corinthians were doing was not the Lord's Supper. They were each bringing their own meal and eating at

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separate times. One was hungry because he didn't have food, and another was drunk! No wonder the apostle Paul had no praise for them.

The apostle goes on to admonish the church in 1 Corinthians 11:27-29,

*Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. (1 Cor. 11:27-29)*

Many people seem to misunderstand what this says. They think they are not worthy to partake of the Lord's Supper. But none of us are worthy; we are all sinners before God. "*But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*" (Isa. 64:6a).

The Lord's Supper may be a good time to remember that Christ died on the cross for your sins and that any sin or shortcoming you have in your life you need to repent and determine in your mind to change your behavior. But it is not a matter of being worthy. The admonition from the apostle Paul is that you examine yourself and eat and drink in a worthy manner; it is concerning how you partake. Some of the Corinthians were apparently having a big feast and not thinking about the body and blood of Christ. When you partake, are you discerning the Lord's body? Are you contemplating that this is the body of Christ nailed to the cross and that this is the blood of Christ that flowed from his wounds – the blood that cleanses you from sin? Or are you thinking about something unrelated? Are you thinking about what you did yesterday or what you will do after the assembly or how you can solve some unrelated problem that you have? This is a pretty serious matter. Verse 29 says, "*For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning*

*the Lord's body*" (1 Cor. 11:29). I would discourage giving the Lord's Supper to an unbeliever; if they don't believe, how can they discern the Lord's body? I encourage you to examine yourself as you partake of the Lord's Supper so that you partake in a worthy manner.

When you assemble, you join in the singing. "*Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord*" (Eph. 5:19). If you have sung a song a hundred times before, when you begin singing it the hundred and first time, are you thinking about the words that you are singing? Or has it become such a habit that you can sing the words but think about something else? I encourage you to be careful to sing in a worthy manner. "*I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also*" (1 Cor. 14:15b).

How about your prayer time? With every word you pray, do you see yourself communicating to your Father in heaven or does your mind wander and you begin to think about something else? Do you repeat the same prayer time after time? When some people give thanks for their food, they say the same words each time. In such a case, the words may lose their meaning and the prayer becomes a ritual rather than communication with the Father. I encourage you to be careful to pray in a worthy manner. "*What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also*" (1 Cor. 14:15a). My encouragement to you is that when you partake of the Lord's Supper, that you discern the Lord's body. When you sing in the assembly, that you sing with the spirit and with the understanding. When you pray to the Father, that you pray with the spirit and with the understanding. In all these matters, that you do them in a worthy manner.

ED ANDERSON  
(Sierra Vista, AZ)

## THE BEGINNING OF DAY

In the beginning  
The gray light of dawn fills the room

Eyes flutter open  
Wakefulness leads to awareness  
Awareness leads to consciousness  
Consciousness bows the heart to You,  
My God!

The heart whispers Your Holy Name  
Extolling you and all that You Are

Order my day  
Arrange the stepping stones of my life

In all my ways  
Direct my path

SAM DICK  
Written from Belize  
July 26, 2017

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## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. How many people were saved in the ark?
2. Which two sisters married Jacob?
3. What was the first plague the Lord sent upon Egypt?
4. What happened to Jesus on the 8th day of his life?
5. With what was Jesus' side pierced?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH...

*(cont. on page 8)*

**FAITH IS TO BELIEVE  
WHAT WE DO NOT SEE**

**FAITH'S REWARD IS TO SEE  
WHAT WE BELIEVE**

## GOSPEL MEETINGS

DATES	PLACE	SPEAKER
May 27 - June 1	Taylor's Cross Roads Roanoke, AL	Wilbur Bass & Joe Hill
June 8 - 10	New Bethel Cullman, AL	Joe Hill (Hagerhill, KY)
June 8 - 10	Hopkinsville Hopkinsville, OH	J. D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 10 - 15	Mt. Carmel Woodland, AL	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
June 17 - 22	Ephesus Ephesus, GA	J. D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 22 - 24	Estesburg Eubank, KY	Joe Hill (Hagerhill, KY)
June 29 - July 1	Owens Road Prattville, AL	J. D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

*(cont. from page 7)*

...and remember last month's questions?

1. How many rivers did the river in Eden split into once it left the garden?   **FOUR** (Gen. 2:10)
2. What did Rahab hide the two spies under?   **STALKS OF FLAX** (Josh. 2:6)
3. In the parable of the good father, if a son asks for an egg, what would the good father not give him?   **A SCORPION** (Luke 11:12)
4. Who did Paul take with him on his first missionary journey?   **BARNABAS** (Acts 13:2-4)
5. Who was Paul referring to when he said, "The Lord give mercy unto the house of \_\_\_\_\_; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain"?   **ONESIPHORUS** (2 Tim. 1:16)