



## 2026 1Q Christ in Philippians and Colossians Lesson 12 Living with Each Other

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

### SABBATH

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What are your thoughts about the lesson? What is the overall message that you came away with from reading it?

What insights, tools, truths, wisdoms, methods, principles did you glean from the lesson that you can put into action that will improve your relationships with others?

Read the second paragraph,

- The closest relationships are, of course, within the family. The home has sometimes been called “the family firm.” It’s an interesting way to describe how the home operates. There are definite similarities between running a business and running a household. There should be general agreement on values, goals, and objectives. Everyone should get along with each other and do their part well for things to run smoothly. The same principles apply to the church, which is essentially a large family. *Adult SS Guide 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2026, Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philippians and Colossians*, p. 92.

I have never heard the term “the family firm” have any of you? It actually sounds quite strange to me.

And the tenor of this idea seems to undercut healthy functioning. But before I point that out, let’s validate what we can.

Yes, families have similarities to a business in the following:

- They have budgets to operate within
- There are schedules for various operations to take place
- There are policies or rules for the running of the system
- Different people have different responsibilities within the organization
- There are often interpersonal conflicts that need resolving
- others?

What are the elements of a family that are divergent from a firm or business?

- Can’t choose the members of your family
- Can’t readily fire members of your family

- The primary motivation to action in a family is...love, the welfare of others in the family. Is that the primary motivation of a business?
- What are the primary goals of healthy families? Isn't it the development, health, wellbeing of each of the members, ultimately focusing on developing a saving relationship with Jesus?
  - is that the primary goal of a business?
  - If a business does value the health of their employees why? Is it primarily because they will sacrifice the business to keep the employees healthy or so that the employee performs better, misses less days, costs them less money and thus the business can make more money.
  - And because the goal of the business is the health of business, can the employee go to the employer with the same level of trust and expectation of help when in need as they can to loving family?
- What is the overriding decision-making factors in a family? Is it good for the family which means good for the members of the family.
  - What are the overriding decision making factors in a business? Is it good for the business, the corporation, not for the employees.

What if we do as the lesson did, and extrapolate this to the church and call the church a family but run it like a business? Then what?

- Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, “You know nothing at all! You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish.” John 11:49-50 NIV84.

Martin Luther has been reported as saying,

- “When the church begins to serve itself instead of the truth of the Gospel, it ceases to be the church.”

While organization, structure, division of duties, roles, budgets, and much more are important in running any effective system, if we intentionally move toward running families and churches as businesses do you think that will make things better, help us become more like Jesus, make us more efficient in sharing the gospel, or make us more efficient in business?

I am not advocating for inefficiency, or chaos, or no structure, only that it seems to me families, as God designed, have the overriding principle of love and are motivated with God's principles to do the best for every member. Whereas businesses have the overriding principle of doing what is best for the business and any benefit to the employee is only if external forces require it or it brings a dividend or benefit back to the business.

Thus if we run the church like a business we will likely fail to fulfill the mission of the church which is spread the gospel for the saving of souls, not for the success of the business—organizational church.

Why do you think various church organizations covered up clergy abuse of children? Were they running things like a family motivated by love and seeking to protect the children from abusers and exploiters, or were they running the church like a business and seeking to protect the reputation of the business even if it means hurting members of the church family?

What did you find from the study of this week's lesson to be the root causes of problems in families, communities, and churches?

The lesson cited that differences of opinions can contribute to arguments—do you think that differences of opinion is the primary reason there is conflict in communities, families and churches?

Or is it the opposite, that differences of opinion one of the signs of health and are necessary for growth and development?

General Patton is reported to have said, "If everyone is thinking the same things, somebody is not thinking."

Differences of opinion are not the root of division in families churches or communities—in fact such differences are what give our relationships texture, interest, substance, and platforms for engagement and growth and development. If everyone always thought exactly the same thing we would not find people interesting, they would be boring, and relationships would disintegrate.

It is not differences of opinion, perspective, ideas, but differences in the motivation of the heart that is the problem. When we are converted to Christ, when we love God, love truth, love each other, then when differences of opinion arise we are interested to understanding where the other person is coming from. We are not afraid to have our ideas challenged because our security is in Christ and we know we don't know everything so we are eager to have someone with a different perspective share it so we can evaluate it based on facts, evidence, truth and decide for ourselves.

When we are motivated by love and truth, we give people freedom to be fully persuaded in their own minds and we are not angered or upset if people disagree with us and we do not seek to punish them if they do, we leave them free to come to their own conclusion.

But when we are not reborn, when we are in the church but are one of the weeds, the tares in Jesus' parable, with hearts still controlled by the spirit of fear. Then we become restrictive, insecure, we fear being wrong, we fear being bad, guilty, inadequate and we find security in knowing the right doctrines, doing the right rituals, and if someone challenges our understanding or sees it a different way—particularly if the other way is true and ours is not—then we experience increasing fear which motivates us to argue, attack, dominate, control, discipline, and even silence and disfellowship voices of truth—just like Jesus, the apostles, God's prophets, and all who advance God's truth have been treated through history.

Paul wrote to Timothy and warned that in the end of time

- “People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— having a form of godliness but denying its power.” 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

What is the reason Paul gives for this break down in healthy relationships?

People become lovers of self, self-centered, narcissists, entitled—and why does this happen?

Because we are all born in sin, animated by the spirit of fear and seek to comfort ourselves in any way we can, with all types of coping mechanism. The only solution for this state of fear, which causes selfishness is to be reborn with a new life, a new animating motive, a new spirit through trust in Jesus Christ.

But we have educated generations in America and the world that there is no God, we evolved from lower life forms, which cuts people off from God’s love inciting more fear. We have also undermined families, which are God’s structure for instilling love into hearts and minds to mitigate fear. We have filled minds with ever increasing violence, decadence, porn and every form of self-justifying pleasure seeking, which only inflames the spirit of fear. We have legalized marijuana and made other drugs easy to get which damages the brain making truth harder to assimilate and increasing fear and anxiety. We have rewarded in society the exaltation of the perverse, lewd, provocative, flamboyant, deviant, and disgusting; and we have validated perverse and corrupt feelings of every kind rather than truth and reality.

Thus, all of what Paul described is the predictable, natural, fruit of deviating from God’s design of love and trust based upon truth.

Love is not natural to our fallen condition. We are born with a spirit of fear and that spirit drives us to seek comfort, security, safety. And without God we are completely incapable of stopping ourselves from attaching to our hearts everything we can to empower and comfort ourselves—hurting others doesn’t matter as long as we can justify that it is good for us.

This causes division as we seek to get for self rather than give for others, and we seek alliances with others who share our view so we can pool our power to take from others what we need to comfort self. And societies fragment into everyone fighting for limited resources. Why? Because there is no love in the heart, no one is seeking to understand the other person, seeking objective reality based God designed truth. Instead, everyone is justifying their own self and fighting for their own survival.

And when that happens societies tend toward fragmentation, conflict, division and authority figures rise eventually leading more domination and external control to impose order on a decaying and fragmenting system—China is a great example of this.

## SUNDAY

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Read the first paragraph,

- Several sets of instructions for Christian homes are included in the New Testament (see Eph. 5:21–6:9, Col. 3:18–4:1, Titus 2:1–10, 1 Pet. 2:18–3:7). Notably, these “household codes,” as they are called, are not completely hierarchical but include elements to make the relationships more reciprocal and mutually edifying. *Adult SS Guide 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2026, Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philippians and Colossians*, p. 93.

What do you think about calling the Bible instructions household codes?

Code is an interesting word, what do you think they mean by this word?

Is the Bible a codebook of deeds to be done and sins to be shunned?

Here are some meanings of the word:

- a system for communication like Morse code.
- a systematically arranged collection of laws, rules, or regulations.
- a word, letter, number, or other symbol used in a code system to mark, represent, or identify something.
- a set of symbols that can be interpreted by a computer or piece of software: Java code; DNA code
- any system or collection of rules and regulations. a gentleman's code of behavior.
- any set of standards set forth and enforced by a local government agency building code, plumbing code, ventilation, sanitary code or health code

Any of those fit with your understanding of God’s Word? The last one would be the closest, a set of standards like building code or health codes because such codes are based on objective laws of physics and health, however it does not fit because those codes are enforced by local government through punishment.

So, if we use the word code for God’s instruction for families, the only way it applies is that it is the code or the arrangement of factors operating in harmony with God’s design through which life and health function. And in regard to human relationships God’s goals can only be achieved **without** external enforcement. As soon as you attempt to enforce God’s design through external oversight, rule, punishment, you immediately break His design code for life and cause damage.

You cannot get love, trust, loyalty, devotion, ever-deepening friendship by commanding it, ordering it, by threatening people who don’t give it, or by inflicting external punishments upon people who don’t give it. All such actions destroy, even if the goal is to enforce God’s “code.”

But what about parents and children? Aren’t parents supposed to use external pressures and punishments to enforce the code of conduct within their homes? And if they do are they harming and if they don’t and let the children do whatever they want then do things get better or worse?

What is the difference between a marriage relationship, adult friendship relationship, and that of a parent child relationship? And remember Jesus has invited us into friendship with Him John 15:15 and that friendship relationship with Him is to be closer than our own family members and come before our own spouses—we are to love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength and then love neighbor as ourselves.

So, what is the difference between adult relationships in which any external enforcement will destroy love, trust, intimacy, friendship and a parent child relationship?

First question, if children were born into a sinless world, with no spirit of fear, no inclination of any kind to function in any way other than perfect love, loyalty, truth seeking, honesty, kindness, patience, integrity, if children were born with a sinless nature as God intended when He created Adam and Eve and instructed them to be fruitful and multiple, would there be a need in homes for any type of rule enforcement?

There would be need for education, instruction, but would sinless children, with no selfish impulse, need rule-enforcement, or if they were flawless, motivated and animated by love for God and all things that are healthy would they be perfectly trusting and obedient seeking ever greater understanding?

In a sinless world, would there be battles with children over bedtime, food, brushing teeth, putting away toys, not playing in the street etc.? I don't think so, why? Because they would have zero urges, desires, impulses to do anything outside of what their parents have instructed because they have perfect love and trust.

But we are not in a sinless world, we are in a world in which we are all born infected with fear and selfishness as the primary motivator to all we do. God has been interceding with His Spirit to put a desire in us for something better, to cause us to be dissatisfied with that state of being and ultimately woo us back into a love trust relationship with Him, but that desire, conviction, longing for something better while leading us to Him does not free us from the domination of the spirit of fear until we are converted, reborn, surrendered to Him. It is only after conversion that we are empowered to live and grow in harmony with God's design. Prior to conversion we have no power to prevent the spirit of fear from shaping our heart and minds into a corrupt system of self-protection seeking to get for and protect self.

The fear-based survival orientation to get for self is how we are born into this world and is why parents must set rules for children because children don't understand reality and don't have any ability to self-regulate, self-restrain, self-discipline and without parental structure and healthy discipline they will be overcome with fear, anxiety, distress and act out in ever more destructive ways. So parental rules and enforcement are necessary because of the sinful state in which we are all born.

Consider a child who has had a broken leg and is in a cast and then has to go to physical therapy, there will be a variety of restrictions on what they can and can't do during this recovery period and a variety of added activities, physical therapy exercises that they must do.

These restrictions and additions will be presented to the child as rules, duties, requirements, or even codes of conduct but they are all based upon the laws of health and are only needed because injury, woundedness is present that needs healing. And these directions are the reality based actions needed to heal and restore, not rules of a legal justice system. When health is restored the restrictions are removed and the remedial code of exercises is no longer needed. Even if one doesn't understand in their childhood why they couldn't do certain activities immediately after the cast was removed despite being able to do the PT exercises, if they follow the code, the prescription laid out, they heal and as they grow up they hopefully will eventually understand there was never a penal legal system of rules and rule enforcement, but a therapeutic structure lovingly put in place to help them heal.

This is exactly what we see happening throughout the Bible. Humanity fell into sin, they corrupted their spirit with fear and selfishness. They have a terminal sin condition, they are sick, diseased, dying.

And because of this, God intervened by introducing a variety of therapeutic actions, codes if you will, some are restricting activities that would not have needed to be restricted had humanity not become infected with fear and selfishness, like restricting access to the Tree of Life. Others are introducing therapeutic actions that also would not have been needed if they were not sick, like various symbolic teaching methods, animal sacrifices, ceremonies, rituals etc. And God began intervening with external consequences, which sometimes are described as both discipline and punishments—these are artificial consequences imposed in love to interfere with the disease progression and save the sinner, similar to parents putting children in time out or taking their toys because they have been hurting themselves with them, or spanking for playing in the street.

But all such disciplines or punishments are stand-between measures not the actual punishment for sin. When a parent spanks a child who has been disobedient to the parents' rules and has been playing in the street, that spanking is not the reality-based punishment for playing in the street, it is the loving artificial discipline to teach a child to avoid actions that take them out of harmony with life. The true punishment would be getting hit by a car and either dying or suffering permanent injury. A child being spanked in love, non-abusively, is not injured, harmed, or permanently damaged, but is being protected and educated from the harm their unrestrained actions will cause.

But at that moment in the child's life, they falsely conclude that the problem with playing in the street is mommy will get mad and they will get punished. Only when they grow up and mature do they finally realize that mommy loved them so much she was willing to step between them and the true reality-based punishment for playing in the street and allow them to think wrongly about her.

And when they realize this, they love her all the more. But if they never realize this, if instead, they leave home believing mommy is all about stern justice, she has her rules and she will enforce them, and someone always has to pay, and the only problem with breaking her rules is the punishment she inflicts, then they leave fearing and distrusting mommy, and love is destroyed and if they don't reject

her and cut ties with her, then they come home with some system of rules of their own, or perhaps an advocate to stand between them and mommy to protect them from her.

This is the Bible, God has been intervening in human history in love, using power to set up artificial rules that He enforces or instructs us to enforce, allow us to falsely believe that the problem with breaking God's instructions is that He will punish, because we are so childish, so ignorant of reality, that if He didn't do this we would destroy ourselves. But sadly, most of the world has falsely concluded God's loving disciplinary interventions with artificially imposed therapeutic consequences are the reality, that God's kingdom is simply made up rules enforced through punishment. And such false beliefs lead people to either reject God and leave the church, or to fear God and set up penal legal systems of theology that function to hide them and protect them from God.

How sad would a loving mother be who disciplined her disobedient child when they were playing in the street to have that child grow up and leave home in fear of her and believe that she is the source of pain, suffering, and even death unless someone appeases her?

Read third paragraph,

- Christ's love for the church in giving Himself up for her illustrates how husbands should love their wives (Eph. 5:25). They will be faithful regardless of the cost. They will make decisions that are in the best interests of the wife, though normally these interests should be aligned. Love like this makes it easier for the wife to obey God's command to respect her husband (Eph. 5:33). *Adult SS Guide 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2026, Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philippians and Colossians*, p. 93.

Do we agree with this principle, that both husbands and wives, if they are seeking to live in harmony with God's principles, will make decisions that they understand believe are in the best interest of their spouse?

But could a person do that, make a decision they are convinced is in the spouse's best interest but which in reality not?

If so, how? How could a person make decisions that are intended and understood by them to be in the best interest of their spouse but are in fact not?

As an example, the doctors who treated George Washington for pneumonia treated him by bleeding and leaching him to bleed out the evil humors. They took this action based on the principle of making decisions they believed and understood to be in the best interest of George Washington, they wanted to save his life. But were their actions in reality in the president's best interest?

I have had patients with serious mental health problems whose family members, seeking to do what they believe is in my patient's best interest, advise them to stop taking their psychiatric medications and pray more. They do this because they believe the person's problem is spiritual rather than biological and the advice they are giving is intended to help. But if a wife has a biological brain-based

problem, say schizophrenia or bipolar disorder, that is improved and well-treated by medications, and her husband tells her that in his understanding she should stop her medications and pray more, and all agree that the husband says this because he is motivated to do what he understands is in the best interest of his wife, should the wife follow the leadership of her husband on this or not?

If she doesn't follow the leadership of her loving husband who is seeking to lead her in the best way he knows how, with genuine sincerity and love, is she being disobedient, rebellious, selfish, and sinful?

What is the principle I am highlighting here in regard to submission to one another?

We are to submit to Christlike leadership and how does Christ lead? **By presenting truth in love and leaving people free to be fully persuaded in their own mind!**

So in the case described above, if the husband was practicing Christlike methods and really believed that his wife needed to stop medication, he would tell her his thoughts, why he believes that, but then would say, "however, God has given you your own individuality, and your own capacity for thinking and deciding, so take what I have said, think it through for yourself, prayerfully, examining the evidence and come to your own conclusion. If you decide that you need to stay on meds, I will respect that and love you just as much. So don't stop because I said so, only stop if you are fully persuaded in your own mind that that is the right action for you to take."

What often happens though, if the husband believes in the penal legal distortion of Christianity in which they believe it is right and just to punish wrongdoing and they then, in what they understand is love and justice, seek to discipline their spouse in some way when the spouse isn't being obedient to the husband? If it is done from a heart that is sincere, acting from a position of doing what they believe is right for their spouse, does that mean it is actually right and the wife should submit? If it is done with sincerity does it avoid the damage?

What is the point I am making? The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth and love, and Jesus was the complete embodiment and lived out reality of truth and love and if we are to lead like Christ we must not only having love in the heart we must actually know truth—which means we must understand design law, how reality works. As Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 13 love always rejoices with the truth!

The doctors who treated George Washington didn't fail to love in their intentions they failed to apply truth and thus harmed.

## **MONDAY**

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Parents and children—parents, what wisdom have you gleaned from your experience in parenting that would be helpful to share with others?

What is the goal of parenting? Isn't it to raise your children in such a way that one day you can quit parenting?

And what would that require? Wouldn't it require that your children mature, which means what? That they have developed the ability to think for themselves, as Hebrews says discern right from wrong, with hearts that prefer and actively seek and choose the right over the wrong, and with internal transformation through their trust in God that they have the fruits of the Spirit including self-control.

Simply put, we want our children to grow up to be wise, loving, responsible people who live like Jesus. And that cannot be achieved through rules and rule enforcement but only by persuasion, experience, choice, and trust relationship with God. Learning through experience that God is trustworthy and His methods are the methods of thriving and wellness.

The problem we have in society is that we have many adults who have never grown up emotionally, psychologically, spiritually and they are completely untrustworthy and unreliable and more of these immature human beings have gotten into positions of leadership and authority and healthy structure, boundaries, methods, are eroding and society is fragmenting.

It would be like putting the prisoners in charge of the prison, or the patients in charge of the hospital, or the addicts in charge of the drug closet.

So, what are important principles in helping children grow up in healthy ways?

Truth and love—children come into the world animated motivated by fear. They immediately seek safety, security, attachment, love, provision from loving and nurturing parents.

Parental love includes much more than simply having affection in the heart, or expressions of love through hugs, kisses, and warm words—which are, of course, part of the loving relationship. Parental love includes providing the reality-based requirements for health and thriving, the basics like food, clothing, shelter, but more importantly a safe home, a home with good structure and predictability and reliability—from the parents, including the ability to have mature safe people for the children to confide in, to talk to, to work through their fears and insecurities.

Healthy love always rejoices with the truth, which is the objective realities upon which life and health operate, and in families is expressed and experienced by the way the parents conduct themselves, in how they establish the home structure, boundaries, and boundary enforcements. Without this fear grows and problems manifest and characters get deformed. Let me illustrate.

When a baby is born into the world they come into the world from a very safe, secure, warm, comfortable place, into a loud, bright, cold, and expansive space far beyond the infant's capacity to understand and process. The infant is frightened and begins to cry—because they are animated by the spirit of fear, they are frightened.

And how do we get infants that are not hungry or in pain to settle down? By swaddling, and what does swaddling do? It provides a reality-based physical boundary that the infant initially struggles against until it experiences it as reliable, something that won't break away, something that provides structure, security, and then then settle down and go to sleep.

The infant grows it moves from the swaddling to the parents' arms, and then from the parents' arms to the parents' presence, and then if the parents are reliable, from the parents' presence to the parents' rules. When parenting is reliable, the same rule that says the child you cannot play outside of our yard, says to the child that the world cannot come into the yard and harm the child—they feel safe in their yard and can continue to grow and develop.

But when parenting is inconsistent then children do not develop a sense of safety, the world is experienced as unpredictable, uncertain, and fear, anxiety, worry take stronger hold and they develop more fear-based perspectives of life.

So, I instruct parents never to set boundaries with children they are not willing to enforce, why? Because when you set a boundary you are giving your word, if you don't enforce the boundary then you teach your children that you are untrustworthy and fear goes up and development is impaired. Children want predictability so if boundaries are inconsistent, they will begin acting out more searching for where life becomes predictable.

What about the Proverb:

- Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6 NKJV.

This is a poorly worded translation; a better translation is “Train up a child **according to his way** and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

Unfortunately, every version I have read suggests the NKJV rendering, how do we know what I am suggesting is the correct rendering?

What if we have a case of perfect flawless sinless parenting, as in God parenting Lucifer and 1/3 of the angels in heaven and God parenting Adam and Eve—He is out heavenly Father. Are we saying that if God only did a better job they wouldn't have gone astray? Of course not.

The proverb is not a promise that if you do a good job you are guaranteed a good outcome, but if you do no job and allow the child to be in charge of their upbringing then they will solidify selfishness into their hearts and become a hardened narcissist and not depart from it.

One other translation which could also be in principle correct, is if you train your child in the right way when they are old they will remember it. It doesn't mean they will turn back, but they will remember mom taught me better than this.

## **TUESDAY**

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Work relationships—what questions do you have about work relationships?

What is our responsibility in work relationships?

First principle of all relationships is: Healthy relationships require healthy people

Second principle: Healthy people are in governance of themselves.

Thus, in every relationship they start with each of us choosing to surrender self to God, being reborn with a new spirit, and then seeking as a first principle to love God with our entire being, and then move forward in carrying out His kingdom in our relations with others.

Understanding this then, means, you cannot have a healthy relationship with unhealthy people—consider Jesus' relationship with Judas—how did it end? In betrayal—why? Because Jesus wasn't good enough? Or because Judas was unhealthy and practiced unhealthy principles in governance of himself and how he interacted with others?

What about work relationships?

Have you established orbits or positions in which you allow people into relationship?

Have you identified the criteria you hold and the qualifications people need to possess in order to enter into different levels of relationship with you.

For instance the relationship between spouses is supposed to be the closest and most intimate of all human relationships. And then close family relationships, children, sometimes siblings, as adults our parents—and sometimes friends can come to be close to us as family members. And then there or neighbors, coworkers, schoolmates, people we do business with, church members, the postman, yardman, etc.

We have relationships with people on different levels of intimacy—what determines who we let into these different spheres?

## **WEDNESDAY**

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Praying for one another—thoughts?

Why do we pray at all? What is the purpose of prayer?

Would we approach prayer differently if we use the word “talk” instead? Let's talk with God.

Does that have the same or different meaning?

Is there benefit in praying, talking to God, and asking for His interventions, involvement, blessing, oversight in other people's lives?

What are the benefits? Are the benefits only to the person we are praying for or do we gain any benefit when we talk with God?

Is there evidence from Scripture that God will act in response to pray in ways that wouldn't happen if we didn't ask Him?

Examples?

- Moses prayed that Miriam have the leprosy removed
- Abraham asked God not destroy Sodom if 50 down to 10 righteous
- Gideon prayed for a sign and God changed the fleeces
- Joshua prayed for the sun to stand still and it did
- Hezekiah prayed for longer life and received 15 more years
- Lot asked not to have to go to the mountains and was given permission to go to a small town
- The Israelites prayed for meat and got sent quail

Why is it that God waits until we ask for many of these things?

A couple of reasons—sometimes what we are asking for He doesn't even want us to have, like the quail with the Israelites, Lot going to a town, the Israelites asking for kings etc.

But what about when God would like to provide something for us, why does He often wait for us to ask?

What might happen if God provided everything we need before we even realize we need it and before we ask? What if life works such that we always have everything we want imagine or need and we never have a need so we never ask?

Could that lead to entitlement? Could it lead to thinking we deserve things? Could that lead to forgetting about God and doing things our own way?

Could asking God and experiencing His answers not only provide whatever we ask for, but could it provide affirmation that we are dependent upon Him, that we cannot make it on our own, but simultaneously that we are valued, we are not alone, we are not abandoned, that God loves us, He hears us, that He is trustworthy and all of that provides something much more valuable than the immediate answer to pray—it provides ever increased assurance, peace, confidence, faith and love and truth that frees us from the fears and insecurities of life.

## THURSDAY

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Read first paragraph,

- What is the most important truth that we, as Christians, can know? Of course, it is that Jesus Christ died for our sins and that, through faith in Him, we can have eternal life. This is a truth that we could have never figured out on our own. Instead, it was a truth that had to be told, or revealed, to us. And it has been revealed to us—in the Word of God. *Adult SS Guide 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2026, Uniting Heaven and Earth: Christ in Philippians and Colossians*, p. 97

The lesson states the most important truth, which means that there is no truth more important than this one, is the truth that Jesus died for our sins and that through faith in Him we can have eternal life—is that actually true? Or is there truth that is more important than that?

Consider this, Jesus said:

- “Not everyone who says **to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’** will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say **to me** on that day, **‘Lord, Lord,** did we not prophesy in **your name**, and in **your name** drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, **you evildoers!**’ Matthew 7:21-23 NIV84, emphasis mine

These people are claiming Jesus as Lord and Savior of their lives—I feel confident that every one of them will know the truth that Jesus died for their sins and through faith in Jesus they can have eternal life—yet they don’t have it—why? Because there is another truth that one must have before the knowledge that Jesus is our Savior does them any good and what is that truth?

The truth of who God is! The truth of God’s character of love. The truth of God’s kingdom of truth, love, and freedom and the truth that God’s laws are design laws. Why?

Because when the beast of Revelation rises and Satan comes he does not come to be worshiped as Satan, he comes to be worshiped as Christ! All those in the end who are part of the beastly system will be worshiping a being they call Jesus Christ and they will claim him as their savior and believe that through him they have eternal life because he died for their sins.

But they will frame all of this in the lie that God’s law functions like human law and therefore God is the source of death that He inflicts upon sinners and that Jesus died to pay the Father His sinless blood to pay our legal death penalty lest the Father kill us. Yes, they believe the statement that Jesus died for our sins so we can have eternal life, but the God they worship is not the Creator, it is a cosmic impersonator.

So the most important truth to know is the truth about God Himself that He is not like Satan has made Him out to be and His law is not the kind of laws creatures use. In that truth, when we are won to trust, we surrender the spirit of fear and are reborn with a spirit of love and trust and God transforms and

heals us and then when the imposter comes and uses the methods of the world we will recognize that is not Christ and will remain loyal to our Savior the true Jesus Christ.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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**The God of Reality: Separating Truth from Fiction Seminar:** August 13-16 2026 Orlando, Florida—More information coming soon. First 500 get five free meals.

**REMEDY APP:** Updated, many new features including the ability to listen to the audio right from the app!

**AFRICA: Healing a Broken Heart** is now available in South Africa in both English and Afrikaans. You can access the Afrikaans version on our website under the Languages tab, or if you are in South Africa and would like print copies, email Jacques Van de Heever at [southafrica@comeandreason.com](mailto:southafrica@comeandreason.com).

Our first shipment of resources has arrived in Kenya, *Could It Be This Simple?* Wycliffe has been passionately sharing this end-time message about God with great success and Jacques van den Heever, our Come and Reason Ministries Director in South Africa has been able to produce and get him these resources. It is through the support of you our friends that he has been able to do this. If you are in Kenya or know someone there who would like this book, email [kenya@comeandreason.com](mailto:kenya@comeandreason.com)

Our South Africa Distribution Director, Jacques Van de Heever, has been translating many of our materials into Afrikaans and now has added Swahili. Reach him at [southafrica@comeandreason.com](mailto:southafrica@comeandreason.com).

Thomas Wansara, in Ethiopia, has been translating blogs and some of our printed and online publications into Amharic and is creating a new Facebook group, Come And Reason Ministries - Ethiopia. Reach him at [ethiopia@comeandreason.com](mailto:ethiopia@comeandreason.com).

If you want to access these translated resources on our website, just click the Languages menu.

**AUSTRALIA:** Simon and Maani Harrison Direct Come and Reason in Australia and New Zealand and have a Facebook group in Australia and Come and Reason resources available there: You can email Simon at [australia@comeandreason.com](mailto:australia@comeandreason.com)

**ENGLAND:** If you are interested in connecting with our team in England you can contact Michael Dragoyvich and his wife Billie Jordan at [uk@comeandreason.com](mailto:uk@comeandreason.com)