

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

CHILDREN

OF GOD

SHINING AS

LUMINARIES

WITNESS LEE

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Living Stream Ministry
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PRAY-READING THE WORD

In Philippians 2:14 through 16 there are many important words and phrases: murmurings, reasonings, blameless and guileless, children of God, without blemish, crooked and perverted generation, shine as lights, holding forth the word of life. We need to pray-read these words again and again. For example, if we pray with the words murmurings and reasonings in 2:14, we shall breathe in the breath of God. Furthermore, we shall come to hate our murmurings and reasonings and aspire to be saved from them. By pray-reading the Word, we respond to it. Then in our experience the Word is not a book in dead letters; instead, it is God's breath, even His breathing.

Sometimes when we pray-read the Word, we may pray a whole verse at one time. However, often it is better to pray-read word by word or phrase by phrase. No one can eat a whole chicken

at once. Instead, we eat a little at a time. In the same principle, we should pray-read the Word a little at a time, perhaps even word by word. If we pray with the words murmurings and reasonings in [2:14](#), we shall receive a divine injection, a heavenly inoculation, which will save us from our murmurings and our reasonings.

In our physical body, we sometimes develop a problem with our skin, perhaps an infection or a fungus. In some cases, neither cleansing nor application of medications to the skin will bring about healing. However, a physician may prescribe medication to be taken internally which will clear up the whole problem. The Bible is a divine medication, the most effective antidote to all negative things. The way to apply the Word as an antidote is not merely to think about it, consider it, or analyze it. We receive the antidote of the Word by exercising our spirit to pray-read it.

[Jeremiah 15:16](#) says, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them.” Like the prophet Jeremiah, we also would eat the Word of God. The Bible is not only for reading and studying, but also for eating. The Lord Jesus said, “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God” ([Matt. 4:4](#)). This indicates that every word of the Bible, even words

such as murmurings and reasonings, can supply us with life. Hence, we may pray-read a verse like [Philippians 2:14](#) word by word. In this way, we shall live by every word that proceeds out through the mouth of God.

SINGING THE WORD

[Colossians 3:16](#) says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to God.” Here Paul does not speak of reading, analyzing, or meditating on the Word. Instead, he encourages us to sing the Word. We should receive the word of Christ not only by reading, but also by singing, psalming, and praising. Whether or not we sing well, the Lord is pleased to hear us singing the Word. He is happy when we sing from our spirit and from our heart. If we do not know a melody to use in singing a particular verse, we may make up one of our own. The important thing is that we learn to sing the Word of God. I believe that one day in a meeting we may spend most of the time singing a book like Ephesians.

We have pointed out that the Lord Jesus said that man does not live by bread alone, but by

every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. The Word, however, is not only food to us and our life supply; it is also a spiritual antibiotic. We should not only be fed by the Word, but should also be inoculated with it against many different kinds of troubles, problems, weaknesses, and “diseases.” Murmuring and reasonings are spiritual diseases against which we need to be inoculated by the Word. Day by day we need to pray-read the Word and sing the Word in order to receive further inoculations. If we pray-read [Philippians 2:14](#), we shall be inoculated against murmurings and reasonings.

We need to take the Bible as a book of life. The whole Bible is the word of life. As the word of life, the Bible is food to us. Would it not be foolish only to study food and not eat it? If we would study our food and refuse to eat it, we would eventually die. Likewise, if we do not eat the Word, we shall die spiritually. It is crucial that we eat the Word by pray-reading it and by singing it.

In pray-reading [Philippians 2:14 through 16](#), we should not simply pray-read these verses as a whole, but should concentrate on the important words and phrases. We need to pray-read the words murmurings, reasonings, blameless, guileless, without blemish, children of God, crooked,

perverted, generation, shine, lights, world, holding forth, word, and life. We may strongly dislike murmurings, reasonings, and the crooked and perverted generation. Nevertheless, the words “murmurings,” “reasonings,” and “crooked and perverted generation” in these verses can supply us with life if we pray-read and sing them. We should hate murmurings, but we should appreciate pray-reading the word “murmurings.” Furthermore, we should not only eat these words, but also digest them and assimilate them so that they may become part of our constitution.

THE INEXHAUSTIBLE RICHES IN THE WORD

Those who have been listening to my messages for many years sometimes wonder why I always have something new and fresh to minister to the saints. The more I pray-read [Philippians 2:14-16](#), the more I realize that we can give message after message on these verses. We may give one message on murmurings, and another on reasonings. Then we need messages on being blameless and guileless. To be blameless is to be without defect in our outward behavior, and to be guileless is to be pure in our inward character. Outwardly, in our behavior, we need to be

without defect; inwardly, in our character, we need to be pure. Surely such matters can be the subject of entire messages.

Imagine how many messages we need on the expression “children of God”! As children of God, we have the divine life and nature. These matters are profound and require many messages to cover them adequately.

We also could give messages on being without blemish, and on the crooked and perverted generation. What is the difference between crooked and perverted? What is the generation in [Philippians 2:15](#), and what does Paul mean by the world? If we ask questions such as these and if we pray-read these verses, we shall be impressed with the fact that the riches in the Word are inexhaustible. Day by day we need to receive these riches by pray-reading the Word and by singing it.

FILLED WITH THE WORD TO MANIFEST CHRIST

If we are filled with the riches of the living Word day by day, spontaneously we shall hold forth the word of life. We shall present the word of life to others and offer it to them. This is to magnify Christ and to live Christ. Christ

Himself is the living Word, the word of life. For this reason, when we are filled with the word of life, we manifest Christ and magnify Him. This is the way to live Christ.

CHILDREN OF GOD

The expression “children of God” implies the life and nature of God. As God’s children, we have His life and nature. Just as a child has the life and nature of his father because he was born of him, not adopted by him, so we have the life and nature of God the Father because we were born of Him and not merely adopted by Him. Praise the Lord that we are sons of the Triune God with the divine life and nature!

Would you not have a special feeling of pride if you were the son of the President of the United States? Would you not feel honored and want to boast of this fact? We, however, have a much higher kind of sonship. We are sons of God possessing the divine life and nature! Once we were sinners, but now we are sons of God. How glorious that we are God’s divine sons!

Because we have the divine life and the divine nature, we can truly say that we are divine. However, this certainly does not mean that we are evolving into the Godhead or that we shall ever

become God as an object of worship. Furthermore, this is not to teach pantheism or the deification of man. Nevertheless, we may be bold to declare that as sons of God with the divine life and nature we are divine. Hallelujah, we are children of God with the divine life and divine nature!

We should not only pray-read the words “children of God”; we should also sing them, either using a familiar tune or making up our own melody. If we sing the Word in this way, we shall be infused, inspired, and inwardly strengthened. We shall also receive a divine inoculation.

THE FUNCTION OF SHINING

In [Philippians 2:15](#) Paul goes on to say that as children of God we “shine as lights in the world.” The Greek word rendered lights means luminaries which reflect the light of the sun. The matter of shining as luminaries indicates our ability to function. Praise the Lord that we are able to shine! We are not only children of God, but are also luminaries with the heavenly function of reflecting Christ as the real sun.

Every kind of life has its particular function. The function of an apple tree is to bear apples,

and our function as luminaries possessing the divine life and nature is to shine. As sons of God with the divine life, we have the function of shining. In our daily living we should not merely behave ourselves according to a certain standard—we should shine.

As luminaries, we in ourselves do not possess any light. Our shining is simply the reflection of light which we receive from another source. Christ is the light, the real sun, and we reflect Him by holding forth the word of life. Thus, our shining is actually our reflection of Christ as the source of our light.

We shine by holding forth the word of life. According to [Colossians 3:16](#), we should allow the word of Christ to dwell in us, to inhabit us, richly. Then we shall have the word of life with which to shine. In order to hold forth the word of life, we must first have the divine life within us. Because we are supplied with this life and energized by it, we can shine as luminaries by holding forth the word of life. The more we are nourished by feeding on the word of life, digesting and assimilating this word, the greater will be the accumulation of the word within us. Then spontaneously we shall shine with the very word of life we have taken into us. This shining will

then be our holding forth, our presenting, the wonderful word of life to others. Those who have contact with us over a period of time will thus receive help from us. If we daily digest Christ as the word of life, accumulating the riches of the Word in a subjective, organic way, we shall have something living and organic to share with others. This is the proper gospel preaching and proclamation of the truth. As we have pointed out, this is the way to magnify Christ and live Him.

May we all pray-read the Word and sing the Word by exercising our spirit. May we be liberated from every kind of bondage in our dealing with the Word and the Spirit. If we exercise our spirit to pray-read, sing, and psalm [Philippians 2:14-16](#), we shall praise the Lord that we are children of God and luminaries shining by holding forth the word of life. If we practice pray-reading these verses word by word and also exercise to sing the Word of God, we shall be permeated and saturated with the rich supply from the living Word. Then our inner being will be filled with the riches of Christ. Spontaneously, unconsciously, and even unintentionally, we shall live a life that expresses Christ and holds forth the word of life. What the Lord needs today is not a

group of people who are religious, but a group of people who live Christ and who shine as luminaries by holding forth the word of life.

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