

March 14 - March 26

LIVING WITH THE
LORD BEING A STORY
OF LOVE

page 3

THE WAY AND THE
PATHS

page 6

WHAT DID JESUS
MEAN WHEN HE SAID
“RENDER TO CAESAR’S
WHAT IS CAESAR’S?”

page 8

BIBLE CHALLENGE

page 11

TESTIMONIALS
DIGITAL
SPIRITUAL



**"IS PRAYER YOUR
STEERING WHEEL OR
YOUR SPARE TIRE?
— CORRIE TEN BOOM**

LIVING WITH THE LORD BEING A STORY OF LOVE

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make an abode with him.

1John 2:27 And as for you, the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone teach you; but as His anointing teaches you concerning all things and is true and is not a lie, and even as it has taught you, abide in Him.

Living with the Lord is not a matter of coercion. Living with the Lord is according to the same principle as that of marriage life, which is not based upon coercion but upon love. It is truly painful for two people to live together without the sweetness of love and without being maintained in love. The Bible also likens our living with the Lord to the living of a husband and wife in love. Our Beloved is the Lord Jesus whom we love, and we are His lovers. We are bound together with Him by the

sweetness of love. Of the sixty-six books of the Bible, one book—Song of Songs—speaks exclusively about the loving relationship between the Beloved and His lovers. From beginning to end, Song of Songs talks about our living a life of love and mutual attraction with the Lord.

In John 14:23 the Lord said, “If anyone loves Me.” All religions, including Christianity, stress respect toward God and fear of God. They state that God is fearful, so man should fear Him. Some religions also speak of worshipping God. These religions assert that since God is great and exalted, man must worship Him. Religion teaches primarily these two things—fearing and worshipping God. The words spoken by the Lord Jesus, however, do not stress fear, worship, or even adoration. Adoration is something that someone who is inferior has for someone who is superior. Instead of stressing these things, the Lord Jesus spoke of love. Love is something that is shared by two people who have an equal standing

and are on the same level. The love between a husband and a wife is a love between equals. In such a relationship it cannot be that one is higher and the other is lower, one is superior and the other is inferior. The Lord Jesus did not say, "If anyone adores Me," He did not say, "If anyone worships Me," and He did not say, "If anyone fears Me." Fear, worship, and adoration are all, more or less, related to religion. Our Lord is not a religion or merely an object of worship. He is a living person.

Our Lord is the ever-living God and the almighty Sovereign of the universe. It is true that He is God, but this God also became flesh, put on humanity, and took on our nature. As a man He died and resurrected, and today He still has His humanity, a resurrected humanity, and He is still Jesus, the Son of Man. Therefore, 1 Timothy 2:5b says, "The man Christ Jesus." Today our God—the Lord of the universe and our Savior—is still a man. Even though He became the life-giving Spirit, He still has the human nature. Thus, He can speak to us about love, something that is shared between those of equal rank. He said, "If anyone loves Me." When we come to this section of the Bible, we may not treasure the word love. We have to realize that the love spoken of here is something more than adoration, fear, or worship. This

love is something shared by two who are on the same level. We are human, and He also is human. We have the human nature, and He also has put on the human nature. He has come to our level. He is not standing above us. He is standing in front of us, on our level, saying to us, "If anyone loves Me."

After the Lord rose from the dead, He immediately went to find Peter, the one who had denied Him to His face. On the night that the Lord Jesus was betrayed, Peter was full of confidence that he would follow the Lord. However, when the test came, Peter denied the Lord three times right to His face (Luke 22:55-61). Shortly after this, the Lord Jesus was crucified and then resurrected. After the Lord had resurrected, an angel told Mary the Magdalene and two other sisters to "go, tell His disciples and Peter" (Mark 16:7). Peter forsook the Lord, but the Lord did not forget Peter. I believe that after Peter denied the Lord, he regretted to the uttermost that he had done so, saying to himself, "How could I have denied the Lord three times?" However, at the very juncture when Peter must have been feeling this way, Mary came and said, "Peter, the Lord wants me to tell something to the brothers and to you!"

In John 21 the Lord manifested Himself to the disciples. While He was manifesting Himself to them, He found time to speak to Peter face to face. He questioned Peter three times, asking him, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" (vv. 15-17). I believe that the Lord asked Peter this question three times because

Peter had denied the Lord three times. The Lord seemed to be saying, "You denied Me three times, saying, 'No! No! No!' Now let Me ask you also three times, 'Do you? Do you? Do you?'" First the Lord asked Peter, "Do you love Me more than these?" Then He asked him, "Do you love Me?" And the third time He asked him again, "Do you love Me?" Peter found it difficult to answer these questions. Just a few days earlier he had denied the Lord, so how could he now say, "Yes, Lord, I really love You"? At the same time, he could not say, "Lord, I do not love You." Peter was probably thinking, "If I say that I do not love the Lord, I will be lying. I do love Him, but my love for Him is so poor. What is my real situation? Only the Lord knows whether or not I truly love Him!" Therefore, Peter answered the Lord, "Lord, You know that I love You."





THE WAY AND THE PATHS

Luke 1:17 And it is he who will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the prudence of the righteous, to prepare for the Lord a people made ready.

Mark 1:2 2 Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet: `Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way,

Mark 1:2 indicates that John The Baptist came to prepare the Lord's way, and verse 3 says, "A voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make ready the way of the Lord; make His paths straight." In these verses we have the way and the paths. To make ready the way of the Lord is to change the mind of the people; it is to turn their mind toward the Slave-Savior and make their heart right, straightening every part of their heart through repentance so that the Slave-Savior may enter into them to be their life and take possession of them (Luke 1:17).

We need to understand the difference between the way and the paths. To prepare the way of the Lord is to repent. We have seen that to repent is to change our mind, to have a turn in our thinking. To turn our mind is to prepare the way for the Lord's coming. The way in verse 3 refers to our mind. We need to prepare the way, make ready the way, of the Lord through repentance. John The Baptist did an excellent job of preparing the mind of the repentant ones for the coming of the Lord.

The paths are all the minor, inner sections of our being: thoughts, likes and dislikes, intentions, desires, decisions. If we compare the mind to a highway, we may compare the paths to small streets and roads. The highway and all the streets in our being need to be prepared for the Lord.

As human beings we are not simple. Rather, inwardly we are very complicated. Consider how many "streets" and "lanes" we have within us. Consider also how

people's minds are away from God and occupied with things of philosophy and culture. How is it possible, then, for Christ to come into people? In order for Christ to enter into a person, the way and the paths within him need to be prepared.

The gospel is not merely an objective matter, for the gospel is actually Jesus Christ Himself as the embodiment of the living God. As such a One, He is waiting for people to open to Him so that He may come into them. However, people have their minds occupied and filled with many things. Therefore, the best evangelist is one who can cut the way in a person's mind and thereby prepare him to receive the Lord. If we preach the gospel properly, eventually the way will be prepared for Christ to come into people and occupy them.

WHAT DID JESUS MEAN WHEN HE SAID “RENDER TO CAESAR WHAT IS CAESAR’S?”

“Render to Caesar what is Caesar’s” is a well-known quote that appears in Matthew 22:21 and is part of Jesus’ response to a joint attempt by the Herodians and Pharisees to make Jesus stumble in front of His own people.

The Herodians were a non-religious Jewish party who supported the dynasty of Herod and the general policy of the Roman government. They perceived that Christ’s pure and spiritual teaching and influence were antagonistic to their interests. The Pharisees, on the other hand, were members of an ancient Jewish sect who believed in the strict observance of oral traditions and the written Law of Moses. They didn’t believe that Christ was the Messiah, despite His many miracles during His earthly ministry. Although Herodians and Pharisees were at opposite ends of the political

spectrum, their common hatred of Christ was enough for them to join forces to try to destroy Him.

Here is the context of Jesus’ command to “render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s”: in Matthew 22 Jesus had just returned to Jerusalem for the final time and recently finished sharing several parables with the crowd. Jesus’ enemies saw an opportunity to put Jesus on the spot in front of His followers. In verse 17, they say to Jesus, “Tell us, then, what you think. Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?” (ESV). It was a trick question, and they knew it. If Jesus answered, “No,” the Herodians would charge Him with treason against Rome. If He said, “Yes,” the Pharisees would accuse Him of disloyalty to the Jewish nation, and He would lose the support of the crowds. To pay taxes or not to pay taxes? The question was designed as a Catch-22.

Jesus’ response is nothing short of brilliant: “But Jesus, aware of their malice, said, ‘Why put me to the test, you hypocrites? Show me the coin for the tax.’ And they brought him a denarius” (Matthew 22:18-19, ESV).

The denarius was a coin used 8

as the tax money at the time. It was made of silver and featured an image of the emperor with an inscription calling him “divine.” The Jews considered such images idolatry, forbidden by the second commandment. This was another reason why, if Jesus answered, “Yes,” He would be in trouble. His acceptance of the tax as “lawful” could have been seen as a rejection of the second commandment, thus casting doubt on His claim to be the Son of God.

With the coin displayed in front of them, Jesus said, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” The Herodians and Pharisees, stating the obvious, said, “Caesar’s.” Then Jesus brought an end to their foolish tricks: “Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22:21, ESV). Upon hearing this, Jesus’ enemies marveled and went away (verse 22).

When Jesus said, “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s,” He was drawing a sharp distinction between two kingdoms. There is a kingdom of this world, and Caesar holds power over it. But there is another kingdom, not of this world, and Jesus is King of that (John 18:36).

Christians are part of both kingdoms, at least temporarily. Under Caesar, we have certain obligations that involve material things. Under Christ, we have other obligations that involve things eternal. If Caesar demands money, give it to him—it’s only mammon. But make sure you also give God what He demands.

Caesar minted coins, as he had a right to do, and he demanded some coins in return, as was his right. After all, his image was stamped on what he had made. God has “minted” the human soul, and He has stamped His image on every one (Genesis 1:27). So give Caesar his due—the temporary stuff of this world—but make sure to give God His due: “Offer yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer every part of yourself to him as an instrument of righteousness” (Romans 6:13).

A H Y M N A D A Y K E E P S
Y O U H U M M I N G A L L T H E
W A Y



I'M PRESSING ON THE UPWARD WAY

1

I'm pressing on the upward way,
New heights I'm gaining every day;
Still praying as I onward bound,
"Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

CHORUS

Lord, lift me up, and let me stand
By faith on Canaan's tableland;
A higher plane than I have found,
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.

2

My heart has no desire to stay
Where doubts arise and fears dismay;
Though some may dwell where these abound,
My prayer, my aim, is higher ground.

3

I want to live above the world,
Though Satan's darts at me are hurled;
For faith has caught the joyful sound,
The song of saints on higher ground

4

I want to scale the utmost height
And catch a gleam of glory bright;
But still I'll pray till rest I've found,
"Lord, lead me on to higher ground."



B I B L E C H A L L E N G E

GOAL: TO READ THE ENTIRE NEW TESTAMENT IN ONE YEAR

5 CHAPTERS A WEEK

MONDAY: LUKE 2

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/42_Luke_2.htm#Luk2

TUESDAY: LUKE 3

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/42_Luke_3.htm#Luk3

WEDNESDAY: LUKE 4

https://online.recoveryversion.bible/txo/41_Mark15.htm#Mar15

THURSDAY: LUKE 5

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/42_Luke_4.htm#Luk4

FRIDAY: LUKE 6

https://text.recoveryversion.bible/42_Luke_5.htm#Luk5

