



Christian Ambassadors, Inc.

My Brother's Keeper

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GROWING on the WORD

A scripture study

The Word of God is the source of light, truth, and power, for those who seek it's meaning and apply it to their life. Jesus Christ is the word made flesh, and we seek to follow him.

John 8:12 (NIV) – “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

Each issue of “My Brother’s Keeper” features a WORD study. This issue’s Word Study comes to us from Roy Roberts, an inmate at ISCI, Boise, Idaho.

Don’t Look Back

By Roy Roberts

The text for this Word Study is;

I Samuel 12:19-25 (KJV) - *And all the people said unto Samuel, Pray for thy servants unto the LORD thy God, that we die not: for we have added unto all our*

sins this evil, to ask us a king. And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart; And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they are vain. For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name’s sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people. Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way: Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

In **verse 19 of I Samuel 12**, we see that Israel is trying to repent through Samuel, because they had asked for a King. Samuel thought he was being rejected because he was the Judge over Israel, but that was not the case. In **I Samuel 8:6-7** we find the truth.

But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. And the LORD

said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

Before we were saved, we were like Israel. We had set up all sorts of kings to reign over us; sex, drugs, alcohol, violence, murder, etc. We tried to fill our “God void”, the place God made for Himself in each one of us, with every type of “quick fix” king that came along. We even changed our kings frequently because nothing would satisfy. Why? Only God can satisfy. So like Israel, we repented of our sins and our sin kings, then we received the one true King, Jesus Christ.

Verse 20 of I Samuel 12 says; *And Samuel said unto the people, Fear not: ye have done all this wickedness: yet turn not aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart;*

We can’t change one second of our past; no matter who you are, what you’ve done, how you worry about it, or how hard you try. What’s past is past. But, we can change our future by believing in and following our King, Christ Jesus!

When we follow Christ, we will serve God. Joshua said;

Joshua 24:14-15 (KJV) – *Now therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt; and serve ye the LORD. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.*

We, too, must choose whom we will serve. Will it be the Lord, or will it be our old gods? What about the gods in the land where we dwell? We are Christians. But, even some Christians have baggage they should be rid of; little gods that have crept in. Choose ye this day whom ye will serve!

Psalm 2:11 says, “*Serve the LORD with fear...*” (meaning reverence).

Psalm 100:2 says, “*Serve the Lord with gladness...*”

We must come to God in a reverent state, boldly! But we must also realize whom and what He is - the great Almighty, the Heavenly Father! And we must treat Him as such.

Also, if we go around with a frown and a sour disposition, maybe we better check our walk, for that is not gladness. If a Christian starts to walk like that – the thing to do is start thinking about what God has done for you, what He is doing for you, and where He has brought you

from. Then start praising Him, giving Him glory, worshipping Him, and thanking Him. Above all thanking Him.

Romans 7:6 says; *But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.*

The law was there to show us our sin. Finding we were sinners, conviction drove us to our knees and to Christ. We went from darkness to light, from death to life in Christ. Therefore we have a new Spirit in us, the Holy Ghost. So, we can serve in newness of spirit and not in oldness of the law.

Hebrews 9:14 states; *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit [Holy Ghost] offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*

In other words Jesus came from God, sinless. He became our sacrifice that through His death our sins would be purged, cleansed, and forgiven. Now we can serve the true, living God.

Verse 21 of I Samuel 12 says; *And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver; for they are vain.*

We should not turn aside from serving God, because nothing or no one, but God, can give eternal life. Buddha can't give eternal life; neither can Mohammad, or Mary. I've even heard of people calling door-knobs their higher power! How ludicrous! All they can do is turn right or left, something we can't

afford to do. No matter what we choose to do, or where we choose to go from God, it is death, both spiritually and physically. Everything but God is vain. If we choose to follow ourselves, it is vain glory, and we will end up spiritually dead. If we choose to follow something or someone else we are asking for death and hell.

Verse 22 of I Samuel 12 says; *For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people.*

Did you know that God will not forsake us? **Hebrews 13:5b** says that He will never leave us nor forsake us. He has put His seal, His great name on our foreheads, and He won't forsake His great name! It pleases God to make us His people. **Luke 15:10** tells us this;

Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

When one of us turns from darkness to light there is a celebration in Heaven. God doesn't have to make us His people, but it pleases Him to do so. Why? He loves us! In fact, He loved us so much that He made us in His image. Then He loved us so much that He came in the image of man to redeem us back to the Father on High.

Verse 23 of I Samuel 12 says; *Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way:*

Did you get this? It is a sin against God if we don't pray for one another. Now you might say, "*wait a minute, Samuel was their Judge, or their preacher, that is why he said that.*" Oh?

Well, let's look at **Mark 16:15**, where Jesus is talking to His disciples. If disciple means follower, and we are followers of Christ, doesn't that make *us* disciples?

Let's look at what He says here to His disciples; "*And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*" (**Mark 16:15**)

According to this we are all preachers. We might not all preach from the pulpit, but we see people every day that need God. We can and should preach to them. But along with this, we need to pray for each other to keep from sinning against the Lord. But, I don't know everyone's name. So, pray for the Body of Christ and you will pray for all.

Verse 24 of I Samuel 12 says; Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you.

Okay, how are we to do this? Jesus tells us how in John;

John 14:6 (KJV) – Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

We must serve God through Jesus. We must serve in truth - Jesus is truth. We need life – Jesus is the life. And we need a way – Jesus is the way. God calls us and draws us, but we can only come to Him one way, through Jesus Christ.

We must also consider what God has done for us. We are to consider where He brought us from; never forget that. Don't dwell on the past, just remember where He brought us from and then give Him praise, honor, glory and thanks.

Verse 25 of I Samuel 12 says; But if ye shall still do wickedly, ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king.

The Hebrew word for *consumed* is "Caphah". It means to scrape, scatter, remove, ruin, perish, consume, or destroy. It never means annihilation or extinction of being, but physical death and ruin in hell, as the scriptures say.

Verse 25 is a warning to all. If we refuse to serve Him, or try to put another king on the throne of our hearts besides Him, we are looking for our doom. There is no room on the throne of our hearts for two kings - just one. Who will it be?

In conclusion – In **Verse 19** of I Samuel, Chapter 12, we find that we must repent of our sins and forsake them.

In **verse 20**, we find that we can't change any part of our past. It's too late for that; but we, through Jesus Christ, can change our future. We must serve God with our whole heart, mind, and soul.

In **verse 21**, we find that serving God is the only way to eternal life. And, everything but Jesus Christ is vanity. If we don't serve God through Jesus Christ, we'll perish.

In **verse 22**, we find that if we truly serve the Lord, our God, He will not forsake us. Other times He's waiting for us to return where we left Him. We might forsake Him,

but He won't forsake us. We also find that it pleases God to make us His people, because He loves us.

In **verse 23**, we find we should always pray for each other, for if we don't, we sin against the Lord. Also, we need teachers to teach us the good and right way.

In **verse 24** we find we must reverence God and serve Him in truth with our whole heart. We do this through Jesus Christ, for He is truth. We must also remember what God has done for us.

And in **verse 25**, we are warned what will happen if we don't choose to serve God. Some may say, "I don't think a loving God would put people in hell." Well, God doesn't – the people themselves, put themselves there. It is their choice.

Let's choose to love, serve, and follow God today by remembering, as well as saying the words of Joshua;

"...But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD." **Joshua 24:15b**

Finally, remember the words of our Lord Jesus as found in Luke,

"...No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (**Luke 9:62**)

So brothers and sisters, let's not live in the past. Let's live in the future in Christ. The past is gone and we are new creatures in Christ!

Amen.



Victory In Christ

By: Larry A. Thompson
Sterling Correctional, Colorado

For those who want...to be better parents and to raise their children by their displays of righteousness, discipline, and compassion; who earnestly desire to break the generational curses of addiction, imprisonment, and waste; for those, such as myself, who acknowledge a longing to be strong in spite of our weaknesses, who accept the promise of God as it is written; for thus saith the Lord: ***“My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness”***, (2nd Corinthians 12:9); there is hope.

For those who need...to discover the measure of love that God has towards them; who need to come to the end of them “selves”, and accept the reality that the day is indeed coming; ***“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ...”*** (2nd Corinthians 5:10); for those such as I, who stand ready to give an account for the lives we’ve lived, and have sometimes squandered, there is a measure of resolve, strengthened by the belief, ***“...for by faith ye stand”***, (2nd Corinthians 1:24b).

For those who will...dare themselves to believe, to trust, and to accept the fact, that ***“God is love”*** (1st John 4:8b), and that His Son, Jesus Christ, lived as a man, died a sinner’s death, and was raised from the grave by the power of God, defeating death for the sinner’s justification (Romans 4:24-25)...for those, like me, who embrace this truth, there is the blessed assurance of Victory in Christ.

For those who want, there is hope. For those who need, there is faith. And, for those who will be faith-full, this promise remains; ***when the resolve of one’s hope becomes the action of their life, that hope leads to Victory in Christ.***
Amen.

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You Asked

Many of you have questions about your spiritual growth and your relationship with Jesus Christ. I make it a practice to seek the Holy Spirit, before personally answering your spiritual growth questions. However, you are not alone in your concerns. Often, others have the same concerns you do. So, when space is available, I will use your questions and my answers to those questions in this column. Thank you for asking.

Your sister in Christ,

Sharon K. Griffiee

An inmate from Colorado asked; ***“Do you have any thoughts or suggestions that would help me to prepare for the trials and tribulations that await me upon release from prison?”***

Yes, I do! Take your time in getting yourself reestablished out in society. With patience, make decisions in an orderly fashion. Many inmates come out of prison, wanting to make up for lost time. Rather than waiting upon the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit, they are in a rush to make their own decisions. So, they try to make things happen in their own strength. As a result, they get trapped in works of the flesh. In panic mode they race around, trying to do too much, too soon. Haste makes waste!

Unwilling to put the amount of effort needed to build a strong foundation in their own life; they hastily look to other people to meet their needs. “*Who can I hook up with that will help me the most?*” The more people they can surround themselves with, the better their needs (wants) will be met – *or so they think*. This self-centered attitude frequently shows up in their relationship with the opposite sex. Before they have gained stability in their own life, and have something solid to offer in a relationship, they have a tendency to hook up with someone who is carrying emotional baggage of their own. What do you get when you put them together? Two people loaded down with emotional baggage (codependency)! Such emotional baggage gets in the way of their smooth transition from prison.

People are not our source. God is our source. If we look to Him, He will, if we ask with a sincere heart, show us what to do (**James 1:5; John 16:13b**). He will direct us toward godly connections.

If you want to prepare for the trials and tribulations that await you, God would have you to **walk circumspectly!** The word *circumspect*, means to be heedful of circumstances and potential consequences. To do this you must walk carefully and accurately, as Jesus would have you walk.

As you know, we live in a fallen world, with many dangers ahead. Remember, the devil is on the prowl, seeking someone whom he

may devour. He shows up as a roaring lion, ready to rip and tear your life apart. His goal? He wants to distract you from fulfilling God's plan for your life. If you are not willing to seek God's wisdom and guidance in the daily circumstances of life, the devil is more than willing to take up the slack. He is more than willing to be your counselor, feed you his lies, and take you captive at his will.

To be self-controlled and alert to his schemes (**I Peter 5:8**), it is imperative that you walk circumspectly, focusing on the light of Christ that is so readily available!

Ephesians 5:14-17 (KJV) – *Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. [bold emphasis mine]*

Fools won't give the Lord the time of day. Why not? They like their own plan better, even though its end is destruction. If you want to be among the wise and follow Christ Jesus when you are released from prison, you must understand what His will is. Only after you understand what pleases God, can you carry it out in your life.

I Peter 4:1-2 (KJV) – *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm*

yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

The words, “arm yourselves” (*hoplisasthe* in the Greek) in this scripture passage, refer to a soldier putting on armor (**Ephesians 6:13**). When he puts his armor on, he puts it on with great determination and care. He knows *whose* he is, and he knows what he is facing. When the day of evil comes he is ready! He is ready to stand his ground. He is done with sin.

You will have many trials and tribulations upon your release from prison. But take heart! If you will embrace Christ's “attitude” toward persecution, trials, and tribulations that come your way – you will do so with an unswerving resolve to do God's will.

Don't let evil overcome you.
Overcome evil with good!

I Peter 2:15-16 (NIV) – *For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men. Live as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cover-up for evil; live as servants of God.*

Amen.



Sharing the Good News

“We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”

II Corinthians 5:20-21

**From: Andre C.
Fayette State Correctional
LaBelle, Pennsylvania**

To: Christian Ambassadors,

First, I would like to thank God in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, for allowing me to have this chance to communicate with you. I have been receiving your literature and newsletters for quite some time, and I want to thank you. I'm now typing you this letter after so long, because I am now saved in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ. I have now given myself over to Him and have allowed God to become my master, my guide, and my teacher.

I have been running from God for so long that I had become lost. I was doing things that weren't really me. I believe that the things I went through in life were things I had to go through in order for God to say; *Are you through running? Are you ready to come home?*

I finally said, *“Yes Lord, I'm ready.”* Praise God! When I look back to those days I say to myself

that God wouldn't let me go, because there are times in my life whereas I shouldn't have even survived. I thank God for saving me. I thank Him for the gift of a new life. I thank Him for sending His Son to shed His blood for me, that I may have the life that God has promised. I am now a son of God.

John 1:12 (KJV) - But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

I'm at peace now. Even though I'm behind these walls, I'm free within my soul. God is so good that it is beyond words.

Christian Ambassadors, I just wanted to write and say thank you for all of your encouragement, and to let you know that you have a new brother in the family of God. In all you do and continue to do in the name of our Lord, may God bless you and keep you in His wonderful comforting grace. Peace and Love, Andre.

**From: Tyrone B.
Collins Correctional
Collins, New York**

Dear Sister Sharon, I greet you in the name of Jesus Christ. I want to thank you for all the encouragement you have given to myself and many other brothers and sisters over the years.

Your lesson on *“Recidivism – Recycling the Curse”*, was very strong and hit home with me. It really strengthened my faith and I

do know that only Jesus Christ can truly change a man's nature; from one of evil desires to one of love. I just really feel closer to God than I have at any other time in my life. Now I know that I can overcome anything I will face in this life, thanks to Jesus Christ.

I also want to let you know that I'm now in Collins Correctional Facility. God is doing an awesome work here among the brothers.

Keep doing the work God has given you. God Bless, Tyrone

**From: Terrance W.
State Prison
Riverside, California**

Dear Sister Sharon, Thank you for your quick response to my letter asking about CA. Now I see and understand how important it is for you to get our Heavenly Father's Word out.

Your Spiritual Growth Lessons, and My Brother's Keeper Newsletter is just what I need right now to help me get through this rough ordeal. I've done a few Bible studies and I'm currently working on one now, but all the brothers in Christ have moved on, so I look forward to the Lessons and Newsletters.

I was brought up in the church but backslid growing up. I ran with a Gang and got into the street life, but the Lord has brought me out of that rut, and cleaned me up.

I will continue to spread Jesus' Word wherever I go in this system, like Paul did. I may be in chains, but the Word of God isn't chained.

Thank you sister Sharon and God bless you and your ministry. With Love in Jesus, Brother Terrance.

From: Sonny M.
Texas Department CJ
Huntsville, Texas

Greetings to you all, I'm just sending you a note to say thank you for My Brother's Keeper! I just got my October-December [2008 issue]. I also wanted to wish you all Happy Holidays! It's really something special you all do for us convicts! Thank you! Your Brother in Christ, Sonny.

From: Daniel S.
Oneida Correctional
Rome, New York

Dear Sister Sharon, I have been a long time reader and receiver of your Newsletters and Bible studies, and have enjoyed the message of Christ that you bring forth through these Newsletters and Studies.

I am currently writing to you so that I may pass on my new address. Thank you for your continued spiritual support for those of us that are incarcerated.

In the name of Jesus, Daniel.

From: Michael J.
Coxsackie Correctional
Coxsackie, New York

Dear Sister Sharon, I have been transferred to Coxsackie Correctional Facility, and I pray that you and brother Alan will continue sending me "My Brother's Keeper" Newsletters and sharing the Word of God.

I've always kept you and Alan in my heart and in my prayers, and especially the men and women whom you have diligently touched behind these prison walls. There are many men and women that have not known Jesus. There are many that never even care about knowing Him. There are many men and women of all races who have committed crimes, but now live for Jesus.

I've personally known men who would hurt you if you would look at them wrong. You can today look at them wrong, talk harsh to them, and they will tell you, *I love you!* They would say they used to live for Satan, but Jesus has changed them. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. Get to know Jesus and you will never be the same.

My beloved sister, I have been going through temptation, but I know I serve a living God. I even face tribulation, have been to numerous parole board appearances – too many to be exact, but I honestly know to trust God. Jesus says in John;

John 16:33 (KJV) - These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

So, I stay grounded on His Word, and I have been attending the studies here. Our church is the International House Of Prayer.

Please keep us men and women and families in your prayers, as we do the same for you and Alan and Christian Ambassadors.

I love you all. May God continue to use you and Alan to reach us and to preach the Word of God. Love always, Brother Michael.

From: Alan and Sharon Griffiee
Christian Ambassadors, Inc.
Colorado Springs, Colorado

Dear Brother and Sisters, Thank you so much for thinking of us and sending your Christmas Greetings and Best Wishes for the coming New Year of 2009. We appreciate your thoughtfulness.

The year of 2008 was a year filled with rich testimonies of God's wondrous love. We at CA consider ourselves very blessed, that so many of you took the time to write and share how God has touched your life with renewed energy, hope, and direction.

We fully expect 2009 to be another rewarding year, where we are privileged to come together around the Word of God and continue sharing in His love for each of us. Blessings to everyone!



Words Of Divine Inspiration
By Anthony Harrison, CA Med, California

- Jesus tells us, if we live godly lives we will suffer persecution. Men hate God and they will hate His children. (II Timothy 3:12)
- God's judgment on sin is certain and severe. His Redemption is equally certain when the human heart welcomes it.
- There is always one thing to do. Do what is right and leave the rest up to God.
- Trials and suffering are education and training.
- God often chooses unlikely instruments to do His work. (1 Corinthians 1:26-29)
- God's Word shows its power in two ways, in destruction and in construction. (Hebrew 4:13)
- Your mind plays an important part in your victory. (Romans 12:2)
- God hates: pride, lies, murder, deceit, mischief, discord, betrayal.
- God has not called the righteous but the sinner to repentance. (Luke 5:32)
- People who spend much of their time in disobedience to God, make little progress during their life time.

My Brother's Keeper

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Vision Statement - Christian Ambassadors exists to bring the ministry of Jesus Christ into the lives of people, demonstrating how the gospel teachings can help a person live a more abundant life, filled with joy, hope, and purpose.

If you, any member of your family, or a friend, are imprisoned, wanting to find new hope, purpose, and direction in life, please contact us at Christian Ambassadors. Our website can be visited at:

<http://www.christian-ambassadors.org>.