

YOUTH PRAYS-GOD ANSWERS!

Glen A. Coon

Name: _____

Date: _____

Lesson 13

ALL SUFFICIENT

Margaret picked up the lesson assignment and read the first part: "Bring in five Bible Promises that deal with everyday life." Then she closed her eyes and claimed the promise for wisdom found in James 1:5.

Since attending a few of the classes on prayer, Margaret was getting better acquainted with her Saviour, and it gave her quite a thrill whenever He sent a definite answer to a simple little prayer of reception.

"Everyday life?" She thought about it for a moment. "That's quite an assignment. I wonder how much time it will take, she thought. When my day begins, it really starts off with a bang, and I certainly need to keep going to stay ahead of a houseful of lively youngsters."

Margaret operated a day-nursery and her days were filled with a variety of problems. She never knew from one day to the next how many children would be present.

She looked at the clock. "Two hours before they start arriving. Let me see, how shall I do this? I know," she mused, "I'll write down everything we usually do each day and see how many promises I have need of. Thank You Lord for this idea."

Margaret was soon in a writing mood, and ideas came thick and fast. Realizing that with an increasing number of children coming, she would need an increasing number of promises, she recalled a typical busy day.

"I usually waken quite early, she wrote, so I have time to study my Sabbath School lesson, read and pray for my family and friends. Then I begin to think about the little ones who will be with me all day, and pray for each of them.

"Now what promise can I claim that will help me today? What do I need most? Patience! That's it--and plenty of it, what with five boys and two girls in constant motion!

"What does 'patience' mean? It means being calm, quiet, uncomplaining. Uncomplaining? Calm? When seven children seem to be talking at once, trying to show me a new dolly, a book, or handing me a bottle or a note. . . not to mention the ringing telephone, or having to rescue the puppy and settle an argument about whose turn it is to hold him. Yes, I need patience! The Lord says so, too.

"Promise No. 1: In Hebrews 10:36, God says: 'Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, Ye might receive the promise.' I'll need that patience in just a few minutes. The school bus will be here any minute, then I'll pass out crayons or magazines and books. I'll have to see to it that they are all entertained and busy before I hurry Walter across the street. Yes, I'll certainly need patience!

"Then it's prayer time with the children. Some insist that they have just had prayer at home. I can insist that we pray again, or I can find another way.

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"Now what promise do I need? I John 1:9, of course, ' . . . he is faithful and just to forgive us . . . ' even when we've been a little hasty with our tongues. I raised my voice before I left the house. I wanted to make sure that the children knew I meant what I said. I run outside, feel the crisp air, wave to the friendly bus driver, kiss my boy good-bye, and thank the Lord for His many blessings to this point.

"I get back into the house, having claimed the promise of I John 1:9 and am ready for the next hurdle. (I like to call it 'hurdle' because the Lord says, 'leap for joy' when you're in trouble. And leaping is a good way to get over a hurdle, isn't it?)

"Promise No. 2: This is found in Isaiah 30:15, 'In returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength.' From Isaiah 40:31, I learn how to be quiet and have confidence: 'They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.'

"Promise No. 3: James 1:5-8, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God; . . .and it shall be given him.' This one I use most of all.

"Now the sun is up a little higher and it looks a little warmer outside. If one child decides to go outside, it's amazing how all of the other little cherubs decide they want to go out too. Everyone is shouting a request, 'Can I go too? Can I go too?'

"All right, what do I do now? Where is the wisdom I've just thanked God for? I tell myself not to waver because I know that I won't receive anything of the Lord if I waver. I must keep calm now and use the wisdom God has given me. God has promised to show me a 'more excellent way' (I Corinthians 12:3)

The easiest way would be for me to say, 'Fine, all of you get your jackets on and go out and play. I've got work to do.'

"But I don't do that because it is not the 'more excellent way'. In this case, and at the present moment the 'more excellent way' is found in Deuteronomy 6:6, 7, 'Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children.' Psalm 127:3 tells us that 'Children are an heritage of the Lord.' Since the younger members of the Lord's family need to be taught, the Lord's wisdom for me is to teach. Teach what? How? Right now? Right now, before the leader of this little flock turns into the Lone Ranger or Bat Man--or something worse!

"Promise No. 4: This one comes to mind easily and quickly. It is found in Isaiah 41:10: 'Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee.' And I say 'Thank You, Lord. Thank You.'

"Immediately I raise my hand for attention. When they are all waiting for an answer, I drop my voice and say very quietly, 'Whose turn is it to help me today?' Of course I don't expect them all to change into perfect little helpers instantly, but one or two of them shout, 'I will!' 'I will!' 'My turn!' The mob has been dispersed, new partnerships have been formed, and again I say, Thank You, Lord. Thank You.'

"And so it goes throughout the day. Each child is different, reacts differently, and so God gives the wisdom to fit the need. Sometimes we stop in the middle of a very important job to read a story, have prayer with a naughty little lamb, or get out the memory verse booklets and repeat some Bible verses.

"Promise No. 5 can be used more than once and in as many different ways. Philippians 4:19 says, 'My God shall supply all your need.' This promise has a partner found in Isaiah 65:24, 'Before they call, I will answer.'

"As everyone knows, children need toys, the kind that fit their needs; little toys for little tots, and bigger toys for bigger ones.

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"The day is far spent, and the hardest time of all is just before us. The older children have just returned from school, and the others are waking from their naps. If any one needs patience, courage, confidence, wisdom and some strength, I certainly do.

"But wait! What's that noise outside? Who's coming? Every child who can climb, tries to see out the kitchen window while the others rush to look through the fence and the back gate. The Lord is supplying our need in two ways. He's bringing something in a trailer, and at the same time giving us a new train of thought.

"As we watch, a voice calls, `Do you want a swing set for that gang of yours?'

"To my great delight my dad and brother begin to unload the parts of three different sets and with plenty of volunteer helpers, very shortly have a wonderful big toy ready for action.

"Amid happy voices and waving hands, they drive away, and you should know by this time what I'm thinking. Yes, I'm saying, `Thank You, Lord. It's exactly what I need.'

"Another great need that is so abundantly supplied, and which is given before we call, is the need for protection from different kinds of germs. Wherever there are babies and small children, we can expect colds, sniffles, earaches, stomach-aches, and all kinds of aches and pains. And we have our share. We are not immune.

"One of my two-year-olds just loves to give away some sweet, juicy kisses, regardless of colds and sniffles. And the 'flu-bug' doesn't care when or who invites him. He just comes, and at the most inopportune times at that. According to all health rules and regulations, I should have been counted among the unfortunate ones on the sick list.

"But I have a Father Who is daily sending protection. And for this, too, I am saying, `Thank You, Lord. I have found Your promises to be all-sufficient in every experience through which I am called to pass.'"

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Two-year-old Betty Jackson looked at her mother, her eyes full of tears that threatened to spill over any minute.

"But I don't want to take a nap," she insisted. "I want to play with baby sister. She doesn't have to go to bed, and I don't want to either!"

Mother Jackson sighed. Why did this same performance have to be enacted day after day? There was no use trying to explain to a two-year-old that the baby had already taken her nap before lunch.

Mother insisted, so Betty tried to settle down as she was told. After what seemed a long, long time, a tired little girl could resist no longer and closed her eyes, gave a big sigh, and relaxed in sleep.

That evening, and again the next morning Mother did some thinking. "Here I am," she said to herself, "taking a course in the science of prayer, and can't even find time to study. I'm sure the Lord wants me to continue, because I do need to learn better how to pray. Well, He'll just have to help me find the time."

After praying for her family, Mother added this petition, "Lord, I need time to read the book that is required in the prayer class. I don't believe I am asking `amiss' (James 4:3), or that it is a selfish asking; so please, Lord, provide the time so I can read. Thank You, Lord. Amen."

Then she went about her usual household tasks.

## Youth Prays . . . God Answers

When it was time for baby's morning nap, an unusual thing happened. Nine-month-old Susan' just could not go to sleep. If she could talk, she might have insisted on playing with Betty. But since that was not possible, she let Mother know in other ways that a nap was not to her liking.

"Well, if you won't, you won't," said Mother, who had many things to do and was hurrying through her work thinking the Lord would work something out so she could study for the class. Her mind was also on the book for required reading that she had gotten at the class.

After lunch, Baby Susan decided that a good long sleep would be just fine. Mother whole-heartedly agreed, and soon tucked her sleepy daughter into bed.

"You darling," whispered Mother. "Why can't your big sister go to sleep as quickly and as easily as you?" And then the thought struck her, perhaps this was the way the Lord had decided to answer her prayer.

Quietly closing the bedroom door, she went in search of Betty. She still did not want to take a nap and tried to persuade Mother that it was not really necessary.

But Mother was determined to help the Lord answer her prayer. The promise found in Matthew 7:7 came to her mind, "Ask, and it shall be given."

"Dear Lord," Mother prayed, "I believe You are answering my prayer for a quiet time to read the book. Please help Betty to lie down and relax now while the baby is asleep. You have promised that if I ask for anything, You will give it me. So I am asking You to let her go to sleep. I believe that she is going to go to sleep now; and I thank You for doing it. Amen."

While Mother was silently talking to the One Who says, "Suffer the little children to come unto me" (Mark 10:14), she was gently rubbing Betty's back and showing her love and attention. Then she began humming softly a familiar tune.

Under the subduing influence, the presence of Jesus was felt in the room, and immediately two-year-old Betty, who up to this time had never gone to sleep within the hour, closed her eyes and was fast asleep.

With a heart full of thankfulness, Mother whispered, "Thank You, dear Lord," and hurried toward her book and a comfortable chair.

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Pearl James was frantic, and time was slipping away. Where in the world had she put those stamps? In the desk drawer? She looked again, without success. In the kitchen by the telephone? No, not there.

"Where, oh, where are they?" she whispered aloud. "They should be here somewhere. Things just don't disappear into thin air! Maybe ..." she glanced at the clock. "No, I'd never make it to the post office now. It's already closing time. But this letter must be in the mail tonight! I just have to find those stamps!"

Is this the way it is at your house occasionally? You may not be looking for postage stamps; it could be your Sabbath school lesson quarterly, or any one of a number of items. What do you do? Do you rely on your own wisdom to find them?

The Lord says, "Call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee" (Psalm 50:15).

After again looking in every likely place, Pearl decided to claim a Bible promise. "If it can work for others, the Lord can make it work for me," she said aloud as she walked over to the sofa where she planned to speak to the Lord.

At the next meeting of the prayer class, the members rejoiced with Pearl as she reported:

"I claimed the promise, 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find' (Matthew 7:7). Then I opened one of the drawers and lifted some papers, and out dropped the stamps!"

He who watches the tiny sparrow is interested in every detail of our lives.

"We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving His promises." The Great Controversy, page 622.

Quiz 13

1. Find five Bible promises that you could use in your daily life. (You may "borrow" any two from the chapter, but try to find at least three texts not in the chapter.

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

2. Thought question: Why does God answer our prayers for even seemingly small or insignificant things?

_____.

3. True or false: The Lord cares about helping us with things as small as stamps. _____. See also, Steps to Christ, p. 100.