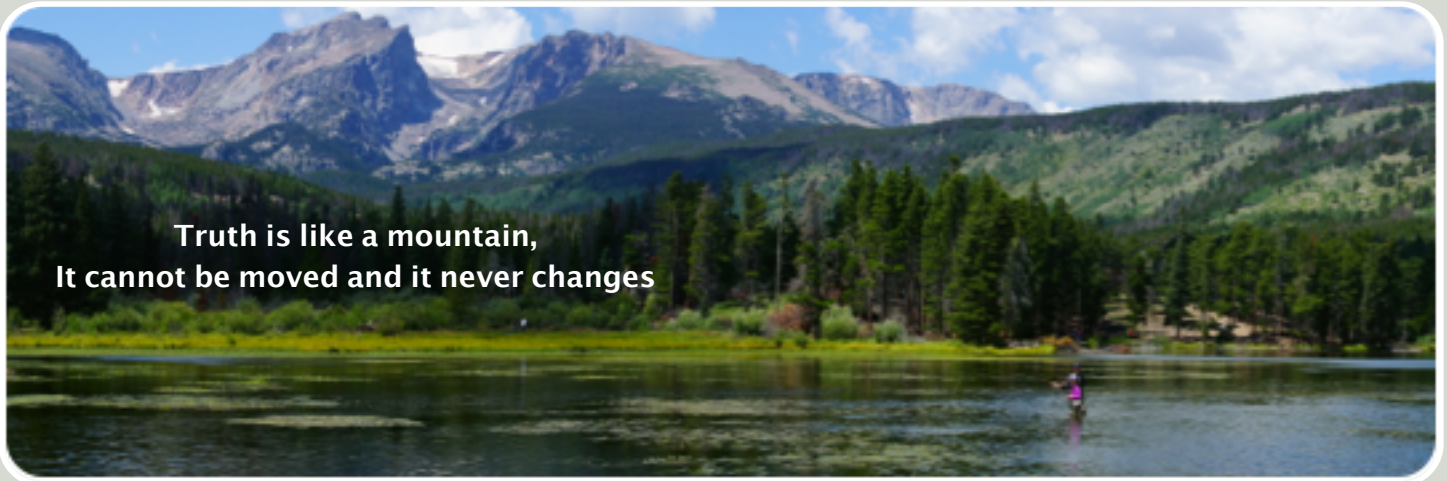


MAY 2024

"TRUTH"

**A SURE WORD
FOR TODAY**



Truth is like a mountain,
It cannot be moved and it never changes

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UPDATE

May is the month when we observe Mother's Day. I want to remind you that it is coming and encourage everyone to honor their mother on May 12th.

The older I get, the more I appreciate all that our mothers do for their families. They are amazing! There is not one man reading this who could measure up! I have concluded that mothers have an anointing from God that thrusts them into the realm of the supernatural daily. There can be no other explanation.

Proverbs 31:26-28

26 She opens her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

27 She looks well to the ways of her family, and eats not the bread of idleness.

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her.

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!

FEATURE ARTICLE: "What A Win Looks Like"

WARNING: You are entering the "TRUTH ZONE". You may not like what you read. At times it may make you feel uncomfortable. That is not my goal. My goal is to speak truth that will provide spiritual guidance for you and your family in a time of great spiritual darkness.

You can be sure that what you read here will be TRUTH!

The Jesus revolution of the late 60s and early 70s saw a tremendous outpouring of God's Spirit that swept millions into the Kingdom of God. At that time, Linda and I were pastoring Northfield Assemblies of God in Gering, Nebraska. Northfield was a small church that had experienced **two** splits when they built a new facility. The church was in financial trouble, and a lot of animosity lingered. As a result, we saw very little growth and were starting to question whether or not we wanted to spend the rest of our lives pastoring.

Then we heard that some young people who partied, drank, and smoked dope had gotten born again. The president of Hiram Scott College knew some of these kids, and because of his influence, they started attending our church. At first, there were just a few, but very soon, there were over a hundred. Linda and I were ecstatic because we felt we were finally seeing our prayers answered. However, our joy was to be short-lived.

These kids were rough. Most of them had no experience in any church, and it showed. I often saw them smoking weed in the parking lot before entering the church. Most wore sandals, and some came with bare feet. The girls wore halter tops, and to make matters worse, they didn't sit in the back; they all sat as close to the front as they could!

Our worship times were changed from organ-led hymns to young people playing guitars, leading us in glorious praise and worship. Life filled our church, and we loved every second of it. Then, one day, the hammer dropped.

The chairman of the church board informed me that the board wanted to meet with me to discuss what was happening in our church. I could tell he was not happy! At the meeting, I was told that the "riff-raff" would have to change if they wanted to continue attending our church. They would have to wear shoes, the guys would have to get haircuts,

and halter tops would not be allowed. And for sure, there would be no more dope smoking permitted in the parking lot! I was told that it was my responsibility to enforce these rules. In good conscience, I could not do this and told them it was not going to happen. One week later, I was informed by the board that my time at Northfield Church was over.

I had been fired!

Now, I faced some tough decisions, all of which seemed wrong. If I went public with what the board had done, it would split the church again, and there was a good possibility the church would become insolvent. Also, the precious new converts would be exposed to the ugly underbelly of the church, and the incredible work God had started would be derailed. Despite this, a part of me wanted to get revenge on the board, even if it meant splitting the church. As you can see, I was in a complicated place and desperately needed God's wisdom.

Most of the following week was spent on my knees, and soon, it became clear that splitting the church could never be justified. My desire to see the church board exposed at the expense of the church's future could only be described as evil, and if I went in that direction, I would answer to God. God assured me that the baby Christians were His and that no man could pluck them out of His hands. He would care for them. And so, the following Sunday, I stood in the pulpit and read my letter of resignation. The letter never mentioned the board because the church and those new converts had to be protected. It was over. Like a championship football team, the board had imposed its will on its opponent and had won.

We have kept this secret for over 50 years, and only now, with everyone on that board passing decades ago, can the story be told without causing damage. Even so, I share it with caution and utmost respect for the church and its members.

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Who really won?

I am sure you have heard the phrase, "The game isn't over until God says it's over." Well, this game wasn't over. After our departure, a new pastor took the reins and skillfully led the congregation to new heights. Once divided, the church now became unified, and their collective efforts soon resulted in a beautiful new sanctuary being built. As for the street kids, I believed it was best to sever all ties with them lest we be tempted to reveal why we had resigned. Now, fast forward to 2021.

In 2021, my grandson John married a girl who grew up in that church, and in March of this year, they moved back to Gering and started attending Northfield Church. On April 13th, we visited them and saw our two great-grandsons. Naturally, the next day, we went with them to church. I can't begin to tell you how many things ran through my mind as we drove into the parking lot. What was I going to see? What was I going to experience? Would it be a dry, dead, traditional church void of spiritual life? Would the pastor be one of those who compromises truth in a vain effort to grow his church? I had so many questions, and they were all about to be answered.

A friendly young couple holding a baby greeted us as we entered the church. I have always believed that one of the marks of a healthy church is having lots of young couples, and at this church, I saw young couples and their children everywhere. This church was healthy!

When it was time for the service to start, the pastor got up, welcomed everyone, and then started talking about Iran's drone attack on Israel. He said that as a church, Northfield would always stand with Israel because they were God's chosen people.

(It sounded exactly like something I would say!)

He was bold and unafraid to stand with Israel. Then, he led the church in a prayer, asking God to protect His chosen people.

(I had goosebumps!)

When the worship and praise team started singing, there was no organ; instead, the worship team was backed up with guitars and drums. We enjoyed the best worship and praise we have experienced in many years.

Next, the pastor got up to preach, and I tell you the truth—he preached the paint off the walls! He was bold and unwilling to water down anything in his message to avoid offending someone. At the same time, he included some "spice" that evoked laughter from nearly everyone in the congregation. He reminded me of me! Later, I told him it was a shame we lived three hours away, or he would have two new members in his church. I did not lie!

After the service, the pastor told me that the church was totally debt-free when he came. When he said that, I had a flashback to my thoughts 54 years earlier, and cold chills ran through my body as **I realized that if I had allowed my flesh to dictate my actions, everything I was seeing now probably would have been aborted.**

I am writing this one day later and can't stop thinking how different the story could have been. I also wonder how different my life would have been had I not sought God and yielded to His wisdom.

James 1:5 AMP

5 If any of you lacks wisdom [to guide him through a decision or circumstance], he is to ask of [our benevolent] God, who gives to everyone generously and without rebuke or blame, and it will be given to him.

As I have already confessed, I lacked wisdom. When I went to God, He did not scold me for having evil thoughts of revenge. Instead, He showed me the path of wisdom, and I shall forever be grateful!

So, who really won?

If we look with spiritual eyes, we see quite a list. My grandson John and his wife, Olivia, won. My great-grandsons, Jaxon and Emmett, won. The young couple who greeted us at the church door won. All the young couples in that church won. All their children won. The folks in Chadron, Nebraska, where Northfield Church now has a satellite church, won. **Most importantly, God won!**

And what about Miss Linda and I?

We left Northfield Church drenched in God's favor, and everything we have touched has been blessed ever since!

James 3:17 KJV

17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, **full of mercy and good fruit...**



A MINUTE WITH MISS LINDA



“Honor Your Parents!”

May and June are the months we observe Mother's Day and Father's Day. On these two days, we honor our parents with cards, phone calls, dinner at a restaurant of their choice, and possibly lovely gifts.

This is all good, and we encourage all our subscribers to remember these two important days. Deuteronomy 5:16 says, "Honor your father and your mother."

But is sending your parents a card or taking them out to dinner really what God was talking about? The Amplified Bible answers this question.

Deuteronomy 5:16 Amplified Bible

16 'Honor (respect, obey, care for) your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that your days [on the earth] may be prolonged and so that it may go well with you in the land which the Lord your God gives you.

"Honor" means to revere, value, or prize, and the Amplified adds, "respect, obey, and care for." This is relatively straightforward yet difficult to do because sometimes, the people we are told to honor fail to act very honorably. Sometimes, good people do things

good people shouldn't do. In those times, we must remember that someone else's error does not permit us to commit our own error.

I want to share how John and I have navigated these troubled waters. We both grew up in good homes and had good parents. However, again, good people do not always do good things. Unfortunately, our dads were human and found themselves in a full-blown feud. It started one day in church when the two of them almost came to blows and had to be restrained by others.

As a result, John's parents were unhappy when we started dating and often tried to set him up with other girls. We were in love, so their efforts were unsuccessful, and eventually, we decided to get married. However, the night before our wedding, they tried to convince my husband to back out and told him he would have their full support if he decided to walk away. The reason they gave was: "You are not just marrying her; you are marrying her family." That same night, my dad got upset with John, threw him out of the house, and told him not to come back.

(They were still 'feudin'!)

John had other issues to deal with when it came to my dad. Throughout his entire adult life, my dad struggled with mental illness. It was good when he was okay, but when he got sick, it was awful, and there were times it got so bad that he had to be institutionalized until he could recover. He was a good man, but those were not good times.

"Honor Your Parents!"
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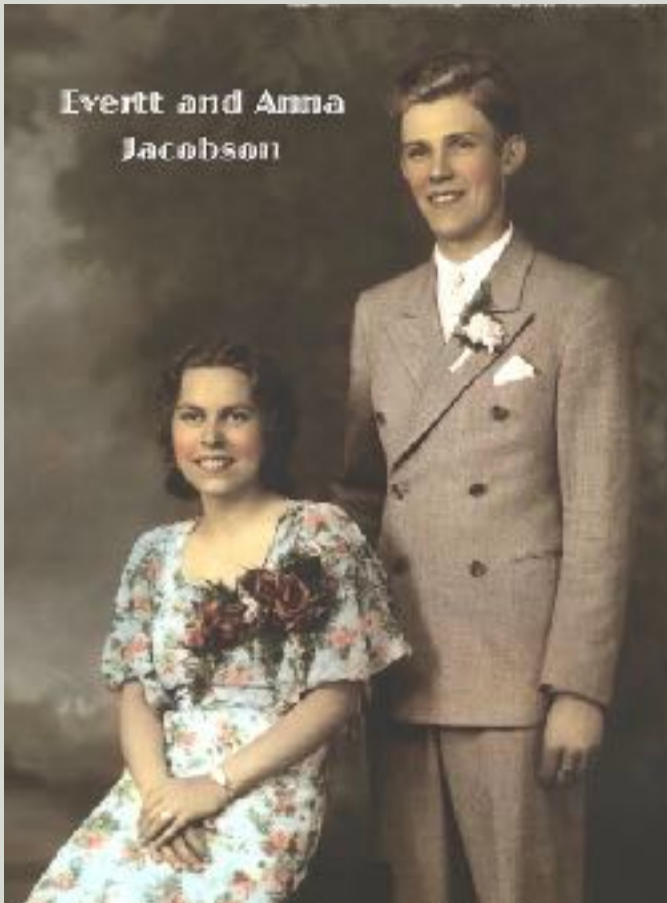
As you can see, John and I had good reason not to value each other's parents highly, but we chose to honor God by honoring our parents. We knew what the Bible said about honoring our parents, and we purposed in our hearts to do it. I would plant flowers for my mother-in-law in all her planters every year, and every Sunday after church, we included them in our Sunday dinner. I could go on and on about how I tried to be a blessing, and in the end, it brought a great healing to our relationship.

John also refused to allow himself not to value my father. I can remember times when Daddy was sick, and no one in the family wanted to talk with him, but John would sit alone with him and talk for hours. They formed a close bond. When we were about to build the church and our home simultaneously, my dad warned us that this was not wisdom. We welcomed his advice and were thankful for it.

For both of us, it would have been so easy to justify cutting ourselves off from our in-laws, but had we done that, we only would have hurt ourselves because this commandment also came with the promise of blessing, **"so that your days [on the earth] may be prolonged and so that it may go well with you...."** We are at a wonderful time in life when it becomes possible to look in the rearview mirror and see how what God says always comes to pass. Indeed, it has gone well with us!

And so, on this Mother's Day and this Father's Day, please don't just send flowers and cards; do some soul searching. Have you truly honored your Father and your Mother? Do you highly value them? If all you can see is their failures and shortcomings, then you have missed out on one of the greatest blessings God will ever give you. They may not be perfect, but they can still be a blessing.

It's up to you!



"Israel's Future"

On Oct. 7, Hamas militants launched an unprecedented cross-border attack on Israel. In a highly organized assault, they bulldozed the border fence in multiple places, caught Israel's security apparatus off-guard, and overwhelmed military defenses. Surprised by the lack of resistance, the attackers turned the operation into a bloody and chaotic rampage through civilian areas.

Militants took over 100 men, women, and children captive. At the site of a dance festival three miles from the border fence, more than 260 bodies were recovered. More Israelis' were killed on that day than any other since the days of the death camps of Nazi Germany. As I viewed the film of the carnage and atrocities committed that day, I felt sure that this time, Hamas had gone too far, and the entire world would be forced to condemn them for their actions. But, to my amazement, that is not what we have seen.

At first, most condemned the actions of Hamas and came out in support of Israel's right and obligation to defend herself. However, this did not last long as, around the globe, anti-Semitic protests rose up, with tens of thousands taking to the streets condemning Israel. It has also become evident that most major news organizations continue to publish stories that consistently paint Israel as the aggressor.

One of the things that shocked me the most was what I discovered as I started researching this article. I Googled, "Why did Israel attack Gaza?" and to my amazement, I found article after article that never once mentioned the atrocities of October 7 but instead chose to talk about the history of the region! I was stunned!

As I write this, the conflict has not ended. Hamas still holds many hostages and appears to have been driven into a small area in the Southern part of Gaza, where they remain hidden in their

tunnels like rats in a city sewer. Because these cowards use their own people as human shields, the destruction and annihilation of Hamas cannot be accomplished without thousands of civilians also dying. In addition to this, most, if not all, of the hostages will be murdered, and again, Israel will be blamed.

All this has caused me to give considerable thought to Israel's future. Israel will survive because God has declared, "I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them." (Amos 9:15)

However, I believe we have entered into a new era of toxic anti-semitism, which will only serve to encourage Israel's enemies. (IRAN) As a result, the conflict will spiral out of control as again Israel is forced to use greater measures to survive. Where will this end, and does this give us a clue as to how near we could be to the end of the church age? We could be very close!

Zechariah 14: 2-4 KJV

2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

3 **Then shall the LORD go forth**, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle.

4 And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south.

COME LORD JESUS!