


BEGINNING THOUGHTS...

The paint was peeling and the drawers were falling apart; it had definitely seen better days. Yet, when my mother-in-law died, the old buffet (a large sideboard with drawers) that had belonged not only to her but to other members of the family, came to live with us...in the garage. It looked so pitiful and shabby—we couldn't bear to bring it into the house. Yet, because it was an heirloom, we maintained high hopes that it could be returned to its original state or as closely as possible.

The day came when we were able to proudly place it in our kitchen. After much care and restoration, the old buffet is now a thing of beauty. Restoration wasn't cheap; we enlisted a professional to do the work. However, cost pales in comparison to value, as it now can be used and handed down to other generations.

Restoration of any kind involves stripping to the very heart of the matter. When lost sinners are found and restored, all Heaven rejoices. God promises, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We are new creatures, changed, transformed, stripped, and restored to what God wants us to be. But our restoration comes with a price. That price was the blood of Jesus shed on the cross at Calvary. No greater love has anyone ever had for us than God in allowing His only Son to die for our sins.

When you look at your life or a life that has been changed and restored, does it make you thankful and appreciative? Will you honor the value of the restored and treat it respectfully? Our buffet, with loving treatment, may last another 50 or so years. Yet, my restored life in Christ will last forever. Oh, the joy of knowing my Lord and Savior and wanting to keep my life in the right condition to meet Him. God can restore anything He chooses, whether it's protection, property, people, a palace or a sinner. Let His love wash over you and restore the joy of your salvation while reading the words of this study.



FACILITATOR'S GUIDE
FEBRUARY 2013

NEAR HIS
HEART

GOD'S RESTORATIVE CARE
FOR ORPHANS
AND THE FATHERLESS

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NEAR HIS HEART

God Restores Protection

POINTER OF TRUTH: *“The Lord preserveth the strangers; he relieveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down” (Psalm 146:9).*

RULE OF THUMB: God Himself promises to protect and uphold orphans—even 21st century orphans, as diverse and unique as they may appear.

- ♥ Write the Pointer of Truth on a 3x5 card or in your journal.
 - ♥ Go over all the questions and answers on p. 35 in *Treasure*.
 - ♥ Does the Pointer of Truth verse give you any kind of comfort? Read Psalm 7:11. How can these two verses help us in the world in which we live? (*God is not going to let the wicked go without being judged.*)
 - ♥ What will God do to the wicked? (*John 3:36; Ephesians 5:6; Romans 1:18; Revelation 20:15*)
 - ♥ These verses are long term for the most part. What can we expect Jesus to do in the present? (**Comfort**—*John 16:33; 2 Thessalonians 2:16*; **Intercede**—*John 17:9*; **Give rest**—*Matthew 11:28*; **Give Peace**—*John 14:27*.) Are you thankful that Jesus does these things for you?
 - ♥ Why does God extend His protective hand over His children? (*Psalm 31:23, 91:14-15, 125:2; Isaiah 41:10*) Can you tell of a time when God had His hand specifically in your life?
 - ♥ In Biblical days, Jewish women received no inheritance. Financially, they were totally dependent upon their husbands, No husband equaled no income. Neglected widows usually meant what? (*Possibly neglected children.*)
 - ♥ What did Jesus promise in John 14:18? (*Comfort*) In Psalm 27:10? (*Take orphans up*) In Psalm 82:3? (*Defend the fatherless*;) In Exodus 22:22-23? (*Hear their cries*)
 - ♥ Name some possible causes for orphaned children and widowed women during Biblical times? (*War, famine, disease, weather elements, lack of medical help and medicine.*)
 - ♥ Imagine yourself as an orphan. How would these characteristics of God bring comfort: (1) God of peace; (2) Unchangeable; (3) Faithful to keep His promise and word; (4) Strong and mighty?
 - ♥ What are some ways people can help orphans today? (1) Adopt; (2) Foster parent; (3) Volunteer in a Christians organization providing mentors for children (4) participate in Operation Christmas Child or CA Christmas Joy.)
- GENTLE TOUCH:** Pray for Free Will Baptist children's facilities and other Christian orphanages throughout the world.



NEAR HIS HEART

God Restores Property

POINTER OF TRUTH: *“Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy” (Psalm 82:3).*

RULE OF THUMB: God’s Word ensures justice for orphans, helping them reclaim what is rightfully theirs.

- ♥ Write the Pointer of Truth on a 3x5 card or in your journal.
- ♥ Go over all the questions and answers on p. 37 in *Treasure*.
- ♥ Do you own property that you have inherited? How would you have felt if that property had been taken away or not passed down to you?
- ♥ Even if you don’t inherit property or real estate in this life, what has God promised regarding our inheritance? (*Matthew 25:34; John 14:2; 1 Corinthians 2:9; Hebrews 11:16*)
- ♥ God will take care of His own. How does Luke 12:7 and 1 Peter 5:7 remind us of this?
- ♥ Would you have enjoyed living in Old Testament times? Why or why not?
- ♥ Do you trust our legal system? Does it ever seem unfair?
- ♥ Where would we be without some form of judgment? When will the final judgment come? (*Revelation 20:11-15*)
- ♥ Have you ever been in a courtroom or before a judge? Do you find it intimidating even if you’re not the person on the stand?
- ♥ Do you like being in authority? (*The responsibility puts a burden on shoulders to do the right thing.*)
- ♥ Did Moses provide leadership and authority. (*Yes—Exodus 3:4-10.*) Who gave him this authority? (*God*)
- ♥ Does God still call leaders today? Can you think of some? (*Pastors, youth ministers, missionaries, children’s workers, worship leaders, etc.*)
- ♥ Did the daughters of Zelophehad obey the law of Moses? (*Numbers 36:10*)
- ♥ What did that law command regarding the inheritance of their father? (*That the land remain in the family—Numbers 36:6-7, 12*)
- ♥ Do you know of anyone who has had property and land for several generations?

GENTLE TOUCH: Pray for people under the stress of court appearances and legal battles. Read “Gentle Touch” on p. 37 of *Treasure*, and offer praise.



NEAR HIS HEART

God Restores His People

POINTER OF TRUTH: *"And who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14b).*

RULE OF THUMB: The same God who used an orphan girl to save lives, expose evil and ensure the continuance of His people, includes you in His plan.

- ♥ Write the Pointer of Truth on a 3x5 card or in your journal.
- ♥ Go over all the questions and answers on p. 39 in *Treasure*.
- ♥ Does God need to restore you in any way?
- ♥ Do you believe, as Esther 4:14 states, that this time in your life has a purpose?
- ♥ Does God call people for His purpose? (*Romans 8:28; 2 Timothy 1:9*)
- ♥ Whom has God called? (*Believers—1Thessalonians 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:14*)
- ♥ Do you find the name of God in the book of Esther? (*No*) Yet what do we see throughout the book? (*God's providential care—Psalm 31:23, 121:3; Esther 2:17, 7:3.*)
- ♥ Is it easy to be a Christian? (*Not necessarily. God even says that in this life we will have trouble—Job 14:1.*)

LEADER'S NOTE: Ray Stedman says: "The definition of a Christian is one who is continually cheerful, completely fearless, and constantly in trouble. Trouble is a continual experience as the Christian goes through life, but in every time and place of conflict God's will and His provision for us is a victory."

- ♥ What did the king have to do to save the Jewish people? (*Reverse the order he signed for Haman that would have destroyed them—Esther 8:5.*)
- ♥ Can you imagine the anticipation and fear of the Jews as they awaited their destruction? (*But wait, now instead of being the "hunted," they are the "hunters."*—*Esther 9:1-2*) Here was the victory for which Esther and Mordecai had prayed and fasted (*Esther 4:16*).
- ♥ Do you need a victory in your life? According to James 4:7, what actions are necessary to experience victory? (*We must both submit and resist.*)
- ♥ Share your victories when God gives them to you.
- ♥ Did Esther become another "forgotten Queen"? (*Her decree in Esther 9:32 for days of fasting and praying continue today. The Feast of Purim is celebrated in honor of God's delivery and victory for His people.*)

GENTLE TOUCH: Pray for your church family, the workers in your denomination, and God's Kingdom.



NEAR HIS HEART

God Restores the Palace

POINTER OF TRUTH: *"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up" (Psalm 27:10).*

RULE OF THUMB: All of us, orphaned, crippled and impoverished by sin, can find restoration, meaning for life and a place in God's Kingdom through salvation in Christ.

- ♥ Write the Pointer of Truth on a 3x5 card or in your journal.
- ♥ Go over all the questions and answers on p. 41 in *Treasure*.
- ♥ How is David described in Acts 13:22 and I Samuel 13:14? (*A man after God's own heart.*)
- ♥ Do you believe this characteristic of David's had anything to do with his taking in of Mephibosheth? (*2 Samuel 9:1*)
- ♥ Why was Mephibosheth lame? (*His nurse and he were fleeing and he fell—2 Samuel 4:4.*)
- ♥ Mephibosheth was only five years old at that time; in our study today, he has a son himself. What happened in the interim? (*He was carried to the land of Gilead, to Lodebar where he lived with a man named Machir—2 Samuel 9:4.*)
- ♥ Read 2 Samuel 21:1-7. During this famine, when men demanded the deaths of Saul's family, why did David spare Mephibosheth? (*Because of the covenant made between David and Jonathan. Read I Samuel 18:3.*)
- ♥ Now Mephibosheth is no longer a servant, but a son. Are you a son/daughter of God? (*John 1:12; Romans 8:17*)
- ♥ Do you believe that David did what he did because of the kindness of God through Jesus on his life? (*Ephesians 2:4-7*)
- ♥ Who might you show kindness to when they aren't expecting it?
- ♥ Mephibosheth learned to love David and expressed his appreciation through loyalty. (*2 Samuel 19:24-30.*)
- ♥ Other than caring for Mephibosheth, what act of David proved his love for Saul and Jonathan? (*He buried their bones—2 Samuel 21:12-14.*)
- ♥ How is Mephibosheth's salvation a word picture of sitting at the table with God to be able to rejoice? (*He was lost but was found—Luke 15:32; Ephesians 2:6.*)
- ♥ Do you want your feet under the table of God?

GENTLE TOUCH: Dismiss in prayer by thanking God for His grace and mercy in making you His child.

WRAPPING UP...

With which of these sections do you most identify? Do you need God's protection over a situation in your life? Maybe you need restoration with some of your relatives. Or do you have property currently caught up in legal battles. Your place may need securing at the palace. Whatever your situation, God can help. He does provide miracles and help in so many areas of our life—so much that we may not recognize them for what they are. Think of something you've agonized over and prayed for an answer. Time passes and you may forget that you asked God for help. Are you still in the same circumstances? If so, the answer may not have been what you would have wanted, but take note of how you've survived the situation. God is at work in your life. He cares for you. He will restore joy, peace, happiness, comfort and hope if we will only let Him.

FEEDBACK

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or improvements you would suggest?
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