

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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Before the Foot Hits the Floor

By W. Frank Walton

"I, O LORD, cry to you; in the morning my prayer comes before you" (Psa 88:13).

I read an article where the author stated that he endeavored to say a morning prayer to God for help, while in bed, "before the foot hits the floor." What a great habit to begin the day with God!

Note that David said, ***"I remember you upon my bed" (Psa 63: 6).*** This is a wonderful discipline to immediately start framing our outlook for the day by first turning to God. David, the spiritually-minded man after God's own heart, began Psalm 63 thus: ***"O God, you are my God, early will I seek you"*** (v. 1). Before the duties and demands of the day begin rushing in to crowd our mind, we need to fortify our mind by beginning the day with God.

Please note the Scriptures that advocate the morning priority of

seeking God by prayer, worship, and meditation on His Word:

"I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words" (Psa 119:147).

"O LORD, in the morning you hear my voice; in the morning I prepare a sacrifice for you and watch" (Psa 5:3).

"I will sing of your strength; I will sing aloud of your steadfast love in the morning. For you have been to me a fortress and a refuge in the day of my distress (Psa 59:16).

"Satisfy us in the morning with your steadfast love that we may rejoice and be glad all our days" (Psa 90:14).

"I wait for the LORD, my soul waits, and in his word I hope; my soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen for the morning, more than watchmen for the morning" (Psa 130:5-6).

"Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust. Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul" (Psa 143:8).

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"When you walk, they [the commandments] will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they [the commandments] will talk with you" (Prov 6:22).

At the beginning of each day, we make choices of how we will conduct ourselves and react to various demands and temptations that face us. When we awake upon our bed, what a marvelous habit we can cultivate by seeking God's help to be faithful and strong, "before the foot hits the floor."

A Healthy Church

by Dan S. Shipley

I had suspected that we were abusing the word "sound" in reference to churches, preachers and others, but didn't realize how much until I heard a member tell of having a cousin that was not sound and had to be straightened out on the issues. It was not until later that I learned that "cuz" was 'a deacon in the Baptist church!

"Sound" suffers no injustice when applied to either people or churches, provided its use is warranted and in keeping with its scriptural sense. God employed this word "hugiaino" to convey the distinct idea of general healthiness and wholeness (1 Tim. 1:10; 1 Tim. 6:3; & Titus 1:13, e.g.); therefore we would do well to use it thusly. As physical health is

more than merely having a few healthy organs, so spiritual health involves a great deal more than just being straight on whatever the current issues happen to be. Perhaps if we would speak in terms of spiritual health instead of "soundness" we would not be so apt to be misunderstood. For instance, I would welcome a "Directory of Healthy Churches". Trouble is, who would compile the listings? Who outside the local church could say it was healthy and who inside the local church would say it wasn't.

In the case of the Laodiceans, God has shown us the possibility of a church being blind to its own condition (Rev. 3). They saw themselves as being spiritually healthy, having (need of nothing while God saw them as being on their spiritual deathbed "miserable and poor and blind and naked." Being sick is bad; being sick and not knowing it is worse. Worse, because remedies are neither sought nor received by those who think themselves healthy. If self is to be examined with reference to being in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5), why not the many "selves" who act as one? A little honest introspection will show us that being healthy before God is more than big memberships, big buildings, big contributions, having "big" preachers and taking "big" stands on issues.

Let us see that a healthy church is one whose members are

truly converted to Christ. Not to the church; not to the family or the preacher; but to the Lord! Everything depends on our attitude toward Him! To love Him is to keep His commandments (**John 14:15**); to serve Him is to serve others (**Mt. 25**). He must be the leaven of our lives; we must continually strive to conform to His image and be careful not to repeat the mistake of the Ephesian church by leaving our first love (**Rev. 2:4**).

Let us further see that healthy doctrine is the lifeblood of healthy churches. All members must know and love Bible truth. They don't resent it being preached plainly and forcefully, they love it (**1 Thess. 2:10**); they desire it (**1 Pet. 2:2**) because they hunger and thirst after righteousness (**Matt. 5:6**). But they not only love truth, they love each other as taught by Jesus in that truth (**Jn. 15:12**). When Christians are cemented together in a local work by love for the Lord, love for His truth, and love for each other, there will be a striving together to do and be all that God wants — and there will be a healthy church!

Security

By Mason Harris

An old European proverb says, "If you can swallow a toad every morning before breakfast, you have conditioned yourself for the

troubles of the day." We live in a world of frustration and despair whose greatest problem seems to be that of security, or rather the lack of it. The history of man is a history of combat and a struggle to survive. And even now the possibility of a nuclear war or some other cataclysmic event dims our hope for survival.

Added to this is a future threatened by inflation, higher taxes, and the snare of easy credit. With all this it is difficult not to worry, to be anxious about the outcome of it all. But Jesus said, "Do not be anxious, saying: What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, With what shall we clothe ourselves? . . . But seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (**Mt. 6:31-34**).

Engineers, in planning a structure, make provision for an ample reserve factor (or safety factor); they design it to be able to withstand a strain ten to fifteen times as large as anything to which they expect it to be subjected in the ordinary course of its existence. Man also needs a reserve factor that he might

keep from reaching a breaking point. He has a tremendous need for courage, patience, and faith. Such strength is available in God. Peter said, "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety upon Him, because He cares for you" (**1 Peter 5:6-7**).

God heard the ancient Israelites when they cried from Egyptian bondage - and delivered them. He heard them again when they cried to Him because of their oppression by the pagans in the land of Canaan-and He sent men like Gideon, Samson, and Samuel and delivered them. God delivered the three Hebrew children from the fiery furnace and Daniel from Lion's den. *Do you serve the same God?* Then what greater security do you need?

Fashion Statement

By Alexander Pope

*Be not the first,
by whom the new are
tried,
Nor yet the last to
lay aside.*

***I put a mirror on my TV set,
I wanted to see what my
family looked like.***
