



*GOD FOR
ALL*

HOLIDAYS!

Booklet 7
“Effective Christian Living” Series.
By Ron G. Christian

#7

"GOD FOR ALL HOLIDAYS!"

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1.

VALENTINE'S DAY – "Can I Experience Multi-Dimensional, God-Like Love in My Own Life?"

Do you realize that Valentine's Day originated as an ancient Christian Holiday? Valentine Day is about patience, kindness, love, and forgiveness!

Patience is that loving spirit which will never give way to vengeance. God's loving, forbearing forgiving, patient attitude toward sinful humanity, is the attitude which every believer is to reproduce in his life. It is God's patience, which breeds man's patience.

*One of the great characteristics of love is kindness. God is love; therefore, God is kind. He is not harsh. He comes not to condemn but to save. He is only severe after his mercy and love are ultimately spurned. As God is kind, so Christians are to be kind. Says the Scriptures, **"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you."** (Ephesians 4:32)*

What is the solution to the problem of envy and jealousy? Allowing the Holy Spirit to shed abroad God's love in your heart. Comparing yourself, not with others, but with Christ and His holy standards, which brings genuine humility, not pride or despair? The humble (self-giving) man who became a martyr for Christ, (who is honored on Valentine Day) epitomized Love!

Rejoicing in the God-ordained place Christ has for you, and learning to rejoice in the God-ordained place Christ has for others. Seeking not the praise and approval of men but seeking instead the praise and approval of God, in serving Christ. Of all people in the world, Christians ought to be the best mannered and most becoming in behavior. The believers' speech ought to be natural, yet refined and edifying to others.

If Christ is the constant unseen guest at every table, and the silent listener to every conversation, how can we ever intentionally be rude?

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Father, I am seeing that I am made by Love and for Loving. If I don't love, I perish, perhaps only gradually but surely and ulti-

mately! Enable me to love with your kind of love—the love that loves love into the loveless, that cares for the careless, that lifts up the fallen, that soothes the sorrowing, that heals the hurting. Let my motions today be the motions of love because I am motivated by nothing less than the love of God! In Jesus' loving name! Amen."

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Love is the very essence of the Christian life and is the capstone of all the Christian graces. Said John Wesley: "Religion is the simplest thing that can be conceived. It is only humble, gentle, patient love".

It was a love-filled man (one who was possessed by God's love), who laid down his life for Christ, that gives the true meaning to Valentine Day (the Day that is named for him, and still celebrated hundreds of years after his martyrdom)!

2.

PALM SUNDAY – "What Should My Attitude Be Towards Christ's Kingship?"

Christ Fearlessly Defied Sin in Every Form When He Saw It. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, as well as his activity in the Temple, may be viewed as a type of magnificent defiance against sin. Christ defied the attitude of the religious leaders who were assembled in Jerusalem. He defied the shallow war cry of the Jewish patriots. He defied the grasping actions of the money-changers and sellers in the Temple.

When Jesus overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, He showed defiance for materialistic preoccupation, especially as it was shown in exploitation of one's fellow men. The simple folks were exploited for money in the name of religion. Jesus knew that men were often greedy and grasping and often obtained money dishonestly. Such exploitation could not escape the scrutiny of Jesus. Jesus not only rebuked outright dishonesty, but also any kind of preoccupation with material things.

Many followed Jesus because he had pro-

vided food for them, but when they realized that His Kingdom was spiritual and not material, they forsook Christ. Christ did not build his Kingdom on the flimsy structure of materialism, which would have led to grasping, greedy, deceitful conduct in men, but His Kingdom is made up of men whose first loyalty is Christ.

Men today who have such a shallow understanding of Christ's mission are ready to cry 'HOSANNA!' - "Save now!" People want to be saved from anything unpleasant or undesirable. However, when Christ offers suffering, sacrifice, a cross, and death, the popular cry of the crowd is no longer "HOSANNA" but "Crucify Him!" Jesus came to cleanse away all cold legalism, and to define worship in terms of loving relationships to one's fellow men and God.

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

It was on a donkey that a King rode. When a King rode on a donkey, it was a sign that He came in peace. However, when He mounted a horse, it meant that he came in war. Jesus claimed to be a King, but His purpose was peaceful, as shown by riding upon a donkey. Jesus claimed to be a King

of peace, not of war, as the Jews wanted Him to be.

In the Temple Jesus confronted the blind and the lame. Matthew records, "And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple and He healed them." (Matthew 21:14) Jesus always responded to need. The lame in the temple could well represent all men who sincerely respond to the Savior, as the true Messiah of God. The lame represent all who feel their dependence on Christ. The Jewish leaders, the crowd, and the moneychangers felt self-sufficient, and therefore felt no real need for the true Messiah. It was the lame who accepted Jesus as the Great Physician whose ministry was redemptive and peaceful.

The Jewish leaders depended upon excessive ritual, the crowd anticipated militaristic victories, and the moneychangers grasped for materialistic gain. The lame, however, based their entire life and future on Christ, and thus they became the object of Christ's mercy and healing. Christ can only help a person when he realizes his own helplessness, and depends solely on Christ.

The children represent all who receive

Christ in simple faith, and who recognize who Christ really is—the Son of God who is the Suffering Servant for Mankind. The Jewish leaders represent those who have rejected Christ, and have become fixed in their formal practices of religion.

When Christ defied the legalism of the Jewish leaders, the fiery patriotism of the Jewish crowd, and the materialistic preoccupation of the moneychangers, He showed that man cannot base his life on anything else but on firm faith in God. Christ today defies the self-sufficient and proud person, but honors the faith of simple, needy people. The lame who are needy and the children who are simple in faith, represent those whom Christ accepts.

TIME FOR PERSONAIZED PRAYER!

"O God, keep me close to your heart, which is the heart of love! Keep me close to your spirit, which is the Spirit of Holiness! Help me to walk in your footsteps, which are the footsteps of love and compassion! Help me to echo your words, which are the words of truth and righteousness! Let me go where you go, to the house of the poor, the widow, and the fatherless! Help me to reach out with concern and understanding to the

ones you reach out to, the homeless and to the imprisoned and to the poor ones in this country and abroad! Deliver me from the 'low life', the life of selfishness, the life of self-indulgence, the life of foolishness and shortsightedness and shallow existence with no over-ruling purpose! Where I am weak, make me strong! Where I am spiritually blind, open my eyes to the reality of your eternal Truth! May I be 'grace-oriented', not legalistic (like the Jewish leaders)! Deliver me from the gross idolatry of materialistic preoccupation (like the moneychangers in the Temple of Jesus' day), and enable me to 'use money' rather than 'be used by money'! Make me a master of money, rather than a servant of money! Help me to see that you, O God, have given me (as your follower) 'all things richly to enjoy'! Seeking you first, these other things will be added unto me—according to Your Will! Amen!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Jesus, on Palm Sunday, was hailed as a great King! In actuality, after the glorious resurrection of Jesus, the believers through the centuries have declared Jesus to be the King of kings! Give Him rightful place in your own heart—as your King!

3.

EASTER - "What Meaning Should I Attach to Christ's Resurrection?"

Christ's Resurrection Was the Greatest Event in Human History, And the Demonstration of God's Greatest Power!

(A) *Vindicated Christ's Righteousness. If Jesus would have not been raised from the dead, certain conclusions would have to be drawn.*

(1) *Jesus was a mere man.*

(2) *Death is more powerful than life:*

(3) *God is not just and loving.*

(B) *Proved God's Promises. For generations, God promised to establish His Messianic Kingdom. The death and resurrection were the fulfillments of that promise.*

(C) *Demonstrated God's Power. "Death cannot keep his prey, Jesus my Savior! He tore the bars away, Jesus, my Lord!"*

(D) *Provided Man's Salvation. Because Jesus died for our sins and because*

He demonstrated His power over sin, death, and hell, you are now provided opportunity for salvation, forgiveness, and eternal life!

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

- (E) *Sealed Satan's Fate. What Satan thought was his greatest triumph becoming in reality, his greatest tragedy! Satan claimed victory when he saw Jesus hang His head in death on the Cross. Satan was crushed three days later when he looked into an empty tomb and knew that Jesus had ascended to the right hand of His Father's Kingly Throne! The demons' cries of triumph on Calvary's Friday suddenly turned into cries of terror on Easter Morning!*
- (F) *Guaranteed Man's Future Resurrection Life. Is there any hope for life hereafter? Without Jesus' Resurrection, there would be no hope for the future, after death. Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me, though he dies, yet shall*

he live.” (John 11:25) Belief in the bodily resurrection of Jesus gives the foundation of Hope in the subsequent resurrection of the body of true believers.

Within the heart of every man is a longing for future resurrection of life! Man is over-built for this world, and aspirations call for a fulfillment that is beyond the scope of time. However, the fulfillment of man's aspirations for the immortal realm is only made possible because of Christ's Resurrection!

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

“O God, I have learned that everyone has faith (trust) in someone or in something, but I know also, that the OBJECT of one's faith determines the VALUE of one's faith! It is so wonderful (freeing) to me to know that when I place my faith in Jesus Christ, I am placing my faith in the One who has conquered my greatest enemy—death! Death has been swallowed up in Victory—All Because Of the Glorious Resurrection of Jesus Christ! I no longer have to be terrorized by death, for death has been destroyed for those who place their faith alone in the

resurrected Christ!

Because Christ vanquished death, I too will vanquish death! Why? Because I have chosen to "die unto my life of sin" (through repentance and trust in Jesus), and because I have chosen to be 'hide in the life of Jesus'. Therefore, what is true of Jesus will be true also of me!

Because I identified with the death of Christ (and, thus, died to my 'old life'), and because I identified with the resurrection of Jesus (and, thus, have been raised to a 'new life', which shall outlast my physical death), therefore the death and resurrection of Christ is the very 'heartbeat' of my existence—for both time and eternity! Thank you, My GOD, for this personal revelation! Amen!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Always remember God's Revelation. Jesus is the Conquering King. Satan is the Defeated Foe! The prince of this world—Satan - has been judged. His sentence of death has been pronounced. God has appointed his day of execution!

4.

CHRISTMAS –

"What 'Comfort' Can I Derive from God's Visitation of This Earth?"

Since God Took Upon Himself Human Flesh, We Have No Right to Despise or Debase Our Human Form.

There are some religions that despise human flesh and declare it profane, useless and evil. The human body and human life, into which our Lord was born, is sacred. In becoming a Man, Jesus has forever sanctified, purified, and ennobled human relationships.

John 1:14 is one of the high marks of Biblical revelation: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; we have beheld his glory, glory of the only Son from the Father."

The glory of deity shone through the temple of human flesh, pronouncing a holy benediction forever upon our human form. The Incarnation shows the glory of being a man.

God, in the person of Jesus, knows what it is to pass through childhood, adolescence,

and manhood—with all of the luring temptations unique to each stage. Jesus experienced both temptations of the flesh and of the spirit. He too felt the pull of materialism; the pull to popularity at any cost; the pull to accomplish the right ends with the wrong means. He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet WITHOUT sin.

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

Jesus knew what it was to work long, hard days, making a living for His family. It is believed that Joseph died while Jesus was a boy, and that Jesus, as the oldest child, provided the living and leadership in the home for many years. His strong skillful hands produced fine oxen yokes, which were sold to provide the living for the family.

*He understood what poverty was all about. After Jesus had entered into His public ministry, on one occasion He said, ***"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head."*** (Matthew 8:20) Jesus understands the challenge of involvement with people, for He worked with all sorts of people—religious and profane, literate and illiterate, high and*

low, rich and poor, young and old, healthy and sick, urban and rural, Jew and Gentile. He understands the complexities of human relationships and subtleties of human nature.

Jesus knows what it is to be misunderstood, rejected, and despised, and he also knows what it is to be hailed, praised, and followed. Jesus knew abounding times and abasing times, prosperity and poverty, apparent success and apparent failure, companionship and loneliness, joy and sorrow, acceptance and rejection. Through all the changes and chances, due to the ebb and flow of life, Jesus learned to be master of circumstances.

As we might say today, Jesus learned to cope with life. To cope with the challenges and responsibilities of life. Jesus' life demonstrates God's total identification and involvement with man's daily changing experiences.

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

O God, I thank you for your total identification with lost humanity, through the sacrificial life and the substitutionary death of

Jesus. Jesus gave His all, that I might have Your all—forgiveness and reconciliation and spiritual healing! I thank You for all You did in sending Jesus to earth to accomplish human redemption. You have shown me so much, dear Lord! However, hitting rock bottom in His identification with humanity, from there Jesus went to the very top.

"Up from the grave He arose, with a mighty triumph over His foes." He is the mighty Victor! Easter always follows Calvary! The sting of death has been 'removed'! The grave no longer has its victory! The victory belongs to Christ, for the grave could not contain Him.

The Incarnation can never be rightly interpreted without gazing into the empty tomb and understanding the personal implications of the empty tomb! As Christ was identified with humanity in His Total Incarnation, so every man can identify with Christ's total victory.

If God is like Jesus, then that kind of God can freely and gladly have my heart's loyal devotion. God's gift was His all, for God emptied Himself totally for my redemption. What will be my gift to God? Nothing less than the giving of my very Self to God is

worthy of God's infinite love for me. Thank you God that Christmas was for the purpose of Easter! Jesus was born into this sin-cursed earth that He might die in order to deliver everyone from Sin! What a Marvelous Savior!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

Jesus knows and understands your every sorrow and grief! There is never a sorrow that He doth not share, nor a woe that He does not feel. He was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. He loves you with an everlasting love!

5.

MOTHER'S DAY: "Can You Share with Me A Biblical Profile of Womanhood?"

What Makes a Woman Great? There are certain traits that set a woman apart as truly great – traits, which are descriptions of true godliness in her attitudes and in her relationships and in her priorities.

A Great Woman Puts God First in Her Life. A Great Woman Respects Her Parents. A great woman, whether she is very young and single, or whether she is older and daughter of elderly parents, respects her parents and brings honor to her parents!

A Great Woman Submits to Her Godly Husband. After she unites at the marriage altar with the godly husband of God's sanction, she must learn the importance of willing submission to her husband's authority and leadership.

A Great Woman Raises Godly Children and Organizes A Godly Household. Physical nourishment, social communication, intellectual enlightenment, spiritual instruction—to accomplish these high goals will

engage the prime time of the wife and mother in her household! Can there be a higher calling than the calling to be God's tool for the careful shaping of the life of her children—physically, socially, intellectually, and spiritually?

A Great Woman Cultivates A Quiet And Reverent Spirit. "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands." (1 Peter 3:1-5)

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

A real woman cultivates the spirit of hospi-

tality. Wrote Peter, "Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay for the night." (1 Peter 4:9, Living Bible)

A Great Woman Cultivates a Simple Lifestyle! Preparing simple nutritious meals, enjoying wholesome and inexpensive pleasures, buying attractive but reasonably priced clothes, driving an economical car, living in a modest house—these are a few ways a man and his wife can demonstrate their commitment to a simple life.

A Great Woman Is Lovingly Involved in Her Local Church! A Great Woman Provides A Godly Example For Younger Women To Follow! Paul to Titus (a pastor): "Teach the older women to be quiet and respectful in everything they do. These older women must train the younger women to live quietly, to love their husbands and their children, and to be sensible and clean-minded, spending their time in their own homes, being kind and obedient to their husbands, so that the Christian faith can't be spoken against by those who know them." (Titus 2:3-4, Living Bible)

A Great Woman fearlessly and humbly uses Her God - Given Gifts and Talents to Serve

Her Church and Her World!

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"O God, as a woman, created in God's image, it is both my privilege and my duty to give supreme reverence and worship to you. Your Son, Jesus, said that IF any one plans to be His follower, they must love Him more than they love anyone else! I want to be a dedicated, love-filled follower of Jesus! With that established priority, I thank you that you will give me strength in my weaknesses, guidance in my confusion, companionship in my loneliness, encouragement in my despair, and comfort in my sorrow! I am so 'human' and so 'fallible', as a woman, as a wife, as a mother! But I, nevertheless, want to be an authentic woman—a woman whose motives are pure, whose intentions are right, whose inner spirit is reverent, whose mind is renewed, whose will is daily yielded to your will, O My God!

I want to be guileless, not deceptive. I want to be diligent in all good works, not lazy and self-indulgent. I want to be ordered and disciplined, not sloppy and slothful! I want to be purpose - driven in carrying out God's assignments to me, not dull of understanding and unperceptive in

knowing God's special call to me! I want to use my hands and my feet in 'going about my Father's business' of winning the lost, of lifting up the fallen, of visiting the imprisoned, of feeding the hungry, of clothing the naked, of giving a listening ear to the distressed! I want to be Your Servant, Dear Lord!"

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

May God bless your own womanhood! Here is a good goal: "She is a woman of strength and dignity. When she speaks, her words are wise, and kindness is the rule for everything she says." (Proverbs 31:25-26)

6.

FATHER'S DAY - "Can You Share with Me a Biblical Profile of Manhood?"

"And, fathers do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of Lord."
(Ephesians 6:4)

If there was ever a time when there was a great need for godly men, and especially for godly husbands and fathers, that time is NOW!

He Can Provide a Consistent Example to His Children in Godly Living! He Can Spend Quality and Quantity Time with His Children!

He Can Disciple His Children Lovingly - never too harshly and never too leniently, molding the child's will to obey proper authorities, but never breaking the child's spirit to despair with life.

He Can Be Authentic and Transparent Before His Children! He Can Love His Children's Mother - his wife—tenderly and openly—thus demonstrating the strength of marital love, and giving security to his children!

He Can Teach His Children to Work and to be responsible persons — learning the value of money without becoming greedy or materialistic in the use of money!

TIME FOR A LITTLE INSIGHT!

He Can Teach His Children to Respect the Moral Laws of God - and remind his children that this universe is a 'moral universe' with definite 'rights' to be affirmed and definite 'wrongs' to be avoided. Make a clear distinction between moral absolutes which are vital for children and youth early to accept, and personal convictions (the moral 'gray areas') which are negotiable and secondary and subject to change and personal interpretation.

He Can Seek to Lead His Children to Christ When His Children Are Very Young. Make this a top priority in your duties as a father. Use every 'teachable moment' you can find to talk about the Lord.

He Can Allow His Children to experience and to express their uniqueness and their own creativity. He Can Love His Children Unconditionally, even if they fail to follow the Christ that he, as father, serves.

But the father's unconditional love, be it a love that is hurt ever so deeply, is a love nevertheless that waits and watches and prays and hopes.

When the once-rebellious son 'comes to his senses' and reveals his true repentance by returning home to plead with his father to make him a 'hired servant', the forgiving father runs to meet the returning prodigal.

The father who loves unconditionally forgives quickly and reconciles totally. He restores dignity to the prodigal and he restores him to the status of full Son-ship!

TIME FOR PERSONALIZED PRAYER!

"Loving Heavenly Father, I admit that I am a fallible, sometimes even sinful, man who feels unfit to be a husband and a father! However, I want to be an honest person, a person with pure motives and right intentions! I want, for my entire lifetime, to be faithful to my marriage vows, and I want to be a good father—a father who loves his children and who regularly provides for their 'basic necessities'! I want to give to my dear wife the attention, affection, and security that she needs. I want my sons to treat their wives (in the distant future) the

way I treat their mother. By exhortation and more by my example (modeling), I want to teach my sons what it means to be a strong family leader (wife and children), without becoming domineering and authoritarian! Fill me with the 'fruits of the Spirit' (love, joy, peace, patience, and much more), so that I might faintly, but authentically show my children what a true Christian really is! As someone said, it is important (in the discipline of children) to be 'Firm, Fair, and Fun!' A good guideline for discipline, but Heavenly Father, I need so much from you—especially divine-like wisdom—if I am to succeed in this all-important task of fatherhood. All-perfect Father, I constantly look to You! Amen".

TIME FOR A WARM AFFIRMATION!

The Heavenly Father loves to help human fathers, who sometimes feel so 'weak' and 'needy'. Affirm the following Prayer: Lord, If Their Guide I Still Must Be Oh! Let These My Children See Their Father Leaning Hard On Thee! (Author Unknown)

*Booklets Of
"Effective Christian Living" Series.*

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2.	<i>THE CROSS OF JESUS!</i>
3.	<i>THE CHRIST OF EASTER!</i>
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5.	<i>CHRISTIAN WITNESS TO OTHERS!</i>
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