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Tower of Strength

“The name of the Lord is a strong tower
The righteous runs into it and is safe.”

—Proverbs 18:10

Why I Quit Going To Sporting Events

- 1.) Every time I went, they asked me for money.
- 2.) The people I had to sit near didn't seem very friendly.
- 3.) The seats were too hard, and weren't all that comfortable.
- 4.) I went to many, many games, but never once did the coach call me or come to my house.
- 5.) The referee made decisions that I just didn't agree with.
- 6.) I suspected that some of the people at the games were hypocrites—they came to hang out with their friends rather than watch the action on the field.
- 7.) Some games went into overtime, and I was late getting home.
- 8.) The band played some numbers that I hadn't heard before.
- 9.) The games were scheduled at times when I wanted to do other things.
- 10.) My parents forced me to attend games when I was growing up, and this is how I get back at them.

—*author unknown*

Four Things God Doesn't Know

Yes, I know that nothing escapes God's all-seeing eyes. He is the omniscient God who is in every place at once. The prophet Hanani said, "the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth" (2 Chron. 16:9). David said "the Lord searches all hearts and understand every intent of the thoughts" (1 Chron. 28:9).

Nevertheless, there are at least four things that God does not know. Let me explain what I mean.

God doesn't know one sinner He doesn't love.

There are no hopeless cases in God's book. Jesus died for every person. This includes the sinners listed in 1 Corinthians 6:9–11 who were involved in fornication, idolatry, adultery, homosexuality, and criminal activity, includes the woman caught in the very act of adultery (John 8:1–11), includes Saul, a self-described "blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor" (1 Tim. 1:13). In fact, it even includes those who delivered Jesus Christ to the cross (Acts 2:23). They all received God's mercy.

God wants us to be serious about sin, and doesn't smile upon it. However, God doesn't just forgive a fixed number of sins and then cut us off when we exceed our limit. Jesus said, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven!" (Matt. 18:22).

God doesn't know one sin he will ignore.

Sometimes we get the idea that big sins we are responsible for, while little sins God overlooks. No, all sins are an affront to God and His holiness.

"Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4). "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all (James 2:10). Let's strive to do our best to overcome sin in our lives, every sin, all sin.

God doesn't know a better plan of salvation.

Improvements have been made in virtually every facet of our lives. And we are the happy recipients (no one wants to go back to coal stoves and hand-wringer washers). But when it comes to salvation, there is no other way than God's eternal way! Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6). Paul said, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

No other plan has been offered, or will be offered. Salvation will not be found in any other person, in any other religion, in any other activity than the blood of Christ. If there were, "Christ died needlessly" (Gal. 2:21); and that's unimaginable, for when Christ prayed that this cup pass from Him, the Father could find no other way.

God doesn't know a better time than now!

While some feel like they need to get their lives straightened out before they come to God, the truth is that it can't be done—no one can straighten his life out without God's help! To put off obedience to Christ is foolish and risky business.

Instead, God's word says, "Behold, now is the day of salvation!" (2 Cor. 6:2). And in another place,

For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, "Peace and safety!" then destruction will come upon them suddenly, like labor pains upon a woman with child, and they will not escape (1 Thess. 5:2-3).

God will never ask us to get serious about our faith "later" or "in a few days" or "in a few years, after I've lived a little first." We are never guaranteed tomorrow, and so we need to live diligently immediately.

—selected

10 Ways to Serve Your Brothers

Sometimes I hear people say, "I'd love to help," but then don't know what to do. Here are some ideas. Dive in!

- 1.) Visit the nursing home and see our shut-ins. There are more than one, and it doesn't take a long time to do.
- 2.) Let our deacon of the building and grounds, Dale Whitworth, know that you will be happy to help him with some of the projects that need to be done, and which times you are available.
- 3.) Organize a get together at your house, and invite over another family for a meal.
- 4.) Make a prayer list and diligently pray for it daily.
- 5.) Send a card to one person a week. The person doesn't have to be sick. It can just be a thank you note!
- 6.) Take food to someone who is sick. Simply look at the family report and find someone who is having a hard go of it, and call them and say, "Dinner for tonight is prepared. I'll bring it over at 5:00pm."
- 7.) Offer to babysit for one of the young couples, so that they can go out on a much needed dinner-date.
- 8.) Ask one of the classroom teachers if they need any help making visual aids. Ask our deacon of the classes, David Pierson, if he needs any teachers or volunteers for the upcoming quarter.
- 9.) Organize an outing for the children, or offer to drive. Or, give money to our deacon of the youth, Doug Brown, so that he can use it to provide activities for the kids.
- 10.) Invite a friend to services. Or, make it your aim to wander the auditorium before and after services to greet new faces.—*John Guzzetta*

Quotes of the Week:

"A man would do nothing if he waited until he could do it so well that no one could find fault."
—*John Henry Newman*